

THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

# Pearls of the Faith

EDWIN ARNOLD



Edited and Prefaced by Hamza Yusuf

Foreword by Dr. Robert P. George

Afterword by Gai Eaton

CALLIGRAPHY BY MOHAMED ZAKARIYA



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE NINETY-NINE BEAUTIFUL NAMES OF ALLAH

# Pearls of the Faith

OR

Islam's Rosary



The Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of Allah (Asmā' al-Ḥusnā)  
With Comments in Verse from various Oriental Sources  
(As made by an Indian Muslim)

by

EDWIN ARNOLD



SANDALA



ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY BY  
MOHAMED ZAKARIYA

Published by Sandala, Inc. 2016  
[www.sandala.org](http://www.sandala.org)  
[info@sandala.org](mailto:info@sandala.org)

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Reprint of the original text published in 1883  
by Roberts Brothers (Boston, MA, USA)

ISBN-10: 0-9855659-4-2  
ISBN-13: 978-0-9855659-4-7

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Calligraphy: Mohamed Zakariya  
Cover Design and Layout: Ian Abdallateef Whiteman

Printed in the United States of America

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the sincere and fair adherents to faith in its various expressions, who recognize that we are all wayfarers trying to make our way back to our Source, and who also, despite disapprobation, choose to stand by beleaguered communities, in solidarity with them, asserting their human dignity and God-given right to worship freely as they see fit. To demonize any people of faith is to diminish all peoples of faith. The Qur'an reminds us, "Do not curse even the idols of others, for that will cause them, out of animosity, to curse God without right" (6:108).

A special dedication goes to the master calligrapher, Mohamed Zakariya, who has patiently waited for years to see his masterful work finally come to light. Thank you.



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## Foreword

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IT IS A tragedy that the image of Islam being formed in the minds of many Americans and others in the West is that of violent Islamist cults such as al Qaeda, Boko Haram, and ISIS. What Christians, Jews, and others need to know is that the Islam practiced by the vast majority of their Muslim neighbors is the very opposite of the ugly and murderous ideology they rightly fear and abominate. Most Muslims are outraged and horrified by those who oppress and rape and murder in the name of Islam. Indeed, Muslims are, if anything, more likely to be among the victims of the oppressors, rapists, and murderers than are Christians, Jews, and people of other faiths.

Islam is a rich and diverse tradition. The literary, artistic, philosophical, and other achievements of those who practice the faith are impressive by any standard of measurement. It has ennobled the lives of countless of its faithful and inspired in their hearts a love of God and an attitude of benevolence to their fellow men—Muslim and non-Muslim alike. As with other faiths, the historical record is mixed; but it is untrue and unfair to depict Islam as inherently evil or to ignore the good that it has inspired.

Although it is not for me or others outside the Muslim community to pronounce on questions of Islamic orthodoxy, or to say what is and isn't "the true Islam," I am happy to introduce this book of poems, originally published more than a century ago, which conveys a sense of the richness of the Islamic tradition and the beauty of its conception of the divine. The poems explore and explain the 99 names of God in Islam. Thoughtfully reading them will deepen Jewish and Christian readers' understanding not only of the points of difference between the teachings of their faiths and the beliefs of their Muslim neighbors, but also the profound points of agreement and unity.

I myself am a Catholic. My Church teaches its faithful to have, in the words of the great declaration *Nostra Aetate* of the Second Vatican Council, "esteem for the Muslims."

"They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all- powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God ... . In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting."

Later the declaration says,

"Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Muslims, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom."

It seems to me that the Church's teaching suggests that Catholics—and others who hold to biblical faith—should take the trouble more deeply to inform themselves of the beliefs of those Muslims—the majority—who wish to be our partners in seeking mutual understanding and working to promote justice and other moral values.

My own belief, based on many years of fruitful engagement with friends and colleagues representing the other great monotheistic traditions, is that Muslims, Christians, and Jews can not only learn to understand each other, we can learn from each other, just as the medieval theologians of all three faiths learned from the great tradition of classical Greek philosophy. All three faiths have produced great thinkers and spiritual leaders. All three have histories that illuminate the human condition. All three have experiences and insights to share.

It is no insult to one's own tradition of faith to suppose that one has something to learn from other great traditions. Indeed, the best versions of all three of the religions which look to Abraham as

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our father in faith teach the importance of the kind of spiritual and intellectual humility that opens hearts and minds to the possibility of precisely this species of learning. Speaking as a Christian, the humility I am bound by devotion to Jesus the Christ to practice impels me to enter into dialogue with my Muslim and Jewish friends with a view not only to sharing the wisdom of my own tradition, but to receiving wisdom drawn from the traditions of my conversation partners. This is scarcely a capitulation to religious relativism; and it is the very reverse of religious indifferentism.

In *Nostra Aetate*, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council pay tribute to "all that is true and holy," implying and then explicitly saying that there is much that is good and worthy, in other religions, especially Judaism and Islam. In so doing, they give recognition to the ways in which religion, even where it does not include the defining content of what the Fathers, as Catholics, believe to be the fullness of religious truth—namely, the Incarnation of Jesus Christ—enriches, ennobles, and fulfills the human person in the spiritual dimension of his being. This is to be honored and respected because the dignity of the human being requires it.

Naturally, the non-recognition of Christ as the Son of God must count for the Fathers as a falling short in the Muslim faith, and even in the Jewish faith in which Christianity is itself rooted and which stands according to Catholic teaching in an unbroken and unbreakable covenant with God, just as the proclamation of Christ as the Son of God must count as an error in Christianity from a Muslim or Jewish point of view. But, the Fathers teach, this does not mean that Judaism and Islam are by Catholic lights simply false and without merit (just as neither Judaism nor Islam teaches that Christianity is simply false and without merit); on the contrary, these traditions enrich the lives of their faithful in their critical spiritual dimensions, thus contributing vitally to their fulfillment.

So I invite my fellow Catholics and other Christians as well as my Jewish friends to learn about Islam and enter into dialogue and fellowship with their Muslim neighbors. And where better to begin

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than with *Pearls of the Faith*? The poems in this book teach us about Islam by introducing us to what, from the Islamic point of view itself, is most important for the faith, namely, its understanding or “concept” of God and His sovereignty. They teach us, for example, about how Muslims understand the profound mystery of God’s distance from us and nearness to us—His profound transcendence and His active involvement in the affairs of men (down to knowing, and caring about, even our innermost secret thoughts). They instruct us regarding Islam’s insistence on God’s absolute unity, His creative power, His unchallengeable authority, His inexpressible mercy and compassion. They inform us of the relationship Muslims conceive between God’s sovereignty and our duties, both to God Himself and to our fellow man, whether it be the duty to deal fairly in business, to respect human life, or to comfort the afflicted and assist the needy.

With many of these Islamic ideas, Christians and Jews will feel a deep, and perhaps surprising, affinity; with some, not so much. But there is everything to be gained, and nothing to be lost, by learning all that is available to be learned about the points of agreement and difference. And even taking into account all the points of difference, the thoughtful reader will notice the enormous chasm that divides the peaceful, life-respecting, God-honoring kind of Islam practiced by most Muslims—certainly most American Muslims—from the violent, murderous, death-cult embraced by ISIS and its ilk. The two religions or worldviews both claim the mantle of “Islam,” but are as different as day and night, life and death, good and evil.

Robert P. George

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## Editor's Preface

---

**B**OOKSTORES, THE BRICK-AND-MORTAR kind, are fast disappearing in our technology-obsessed culture, as more and more people favor buying online. But I like walking into a bookstore browsing the offerings like a treasure hunter, and on occasion that hunt has led me to what can only be construed as “mystical” experiences. One such experience took place almost twenty years ago in a small used bookstore in the old city in Rabat, Morocco. The owner, who knew me for many years as a buyer of books, was himself a lover of books and usually sat behind a long counter with a shelf at his back that displayed treasures of the Islamic tradition.

On this particular occasion, I told the owner I was seeking a book with a thorough explanation of a subject known as *tawqīt* in Arabic, which is an amalgam of astronomy, sacred timekeeping, and calendar studies. I had begun studying the subject during my time in Mauritania, and Morocco was one of the few places where it was still taught. The owner reached back, picked up a small paperback, and handed it to me. It was *The Science of Topography* by Naṣīr al-Ṭūsī, one of the great polymaths of Islamic history. But while the book was related to *tawqīt*, it covered a different subject. Hence, I said to the owner, “No. I would like something on *tawqīt*; this is about *hay’ah* (topography).”

Then my eye fell upon a small blue book with no name on the spine. I was intrigued by it. Pointing to it, I asked, “What is that small blue book there?” He took it down and handed it to me.

I opened the book, and these were the first lines I read:

O one asking for an abridgment of the science of *tawqīt*,  
Take this one by the help of the All Powerful, al-Muhaymin,  
Who is in charge of all affairs.

The book was the most popular Moroccan text on the very subject I was looking for!

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About twenty years later and halfway across the world, I found myself in a small used bookstore in San Ramon, California. While browsing shelves of older books, I came upon a green, ornately gilded antiquarian book called *Pearls of the Faith*. I assumed it was a Christian book, but the title was tempting, and I thought perhaps there might be some pearls in it for a Muslim like me. I opened it, only to read these words:

Call Him Muhaimin, "Help in danger's hour,"  
Protector of the true who trust his power.

Above those words, in Arabic script, was the divine name, *al-Muhamman*, the same name in the book I had found in Morocco! As it turned out, this book was on the Ninety-Nine Names of God, which are mentioned in the hadith literature and dispersed throughout the Qur'an as attributes that serve as edifying endings to verses; they also add subtle nuance to meanings contained in the verses themselves. The author of the book was a Victorian Englishman, a distinguished notable of his time, named Edwin Arnold.

★ ★ ★

The magisterial eleventh edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica* (1911) credits Sir Edwin Arnold, among other things, as the man who arranged H.M. Stanley's expedition to Africa in order to find the course of the Congo River. Arnold, born in 1832 in a town just outside London, studied at Oxford and then went to India to serve as the head of a college in Pune, and there he became deeply familiar with both Buddhist and Muslim teachings. He subsequently returned to England in 1861 to work as a journalist and later as editor for *The Daily Telegraph*.

This was a time when England was mired in colonial enterprises throughout the world, and *The Daily Telegraph* would churn out stories, often laced with racist and imperialist overtones, of Mus-

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lims fighting British soldiers. Having lived among Asiatic peoples, Arnold was distressed by the prejudices of his own society as well as the religious illiteracy of even the educated classes. He set out to educate his class and increase their religious literacy by way of poetry and first penned an epic poem on the life of Buddha entitled, *The Light of Asia*. It was received with critical acclaim in 1879. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states,

The poem contains many lines of unquestionable beauty; and its immediate popularity was rather increased than diminished by the twofold criticism to which it was subjected. On the one hand it was held by Oriental scholars to give a false impression of Buddhist doctrine; while, on the other, the suggested analogy between Sakyamuni [Buddha] and Christ offended the taste of some devout Christians.<sup>A</sup>

After the success of *The Light of Asia*, he penned a second poem hoping to enlighten his fellow Englishmen about Islam; his goal was to use the Ninety-Nine Names of God as a conceit to explain Islam through the power of poetry, then extremely popular in Victorian England. This effort culminated in *Pearls of the Faith, or Islam's Rosary, Being the Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of Allah*. While *Pearls of the Faith* was not as popular as Arnold's first book, it was well received by the public. An interesting aside is that the first edition is dedicated to "The Many Friends in America (known and unknown)."

I have in my personal library a copy of *Pearls of the Faith* that Arnold signed and gifted to his mother in December of 1882, the year before it was officially released. The dedication reads, "Mrs. R.C. Arnold, with the author's endless love and reverence, Dec.

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<sup>A</sup> The *Encyclopædia Britannica*: A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information, Eleventh Edition, Vol. II, Andros to Austria. Cambridge, England: University Press, 1911, 634.

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1882." The gentility and decorum is quite telling of the times.

The book itself is a collection of largely iambic pentameter essays on each of the Ninety-Nine Names of God. He uses Qur'an, Qur'anic commentary, hadith tradition, as well as selections from Persian and Indian poetry that are often apocryphal.

What was his idea behind the book? He states clearly in the preface,

Not more sublime, therefore, in religious history appears the figure of Paul the tent-maker, proclaiming the "Unknown God" at Athens, than that of the camel-driver Muhammad, son of Abdallah and Amīnah, abolishing all the idols of the Arabian Pantheon, except their chief – Allah Ta'Alah, "God the Most High" – and under that ancient and well-received appellation establishing the oneness of the origin, government, and life of the universe. Thereby that marvelous and gifted Teacher created a vast empire of new belief and new civilisation, and prepared a sixth part of humanity for the developments and reconciliations which later times will bring. For Islām must be conciliated; it cannot be thrust scornfully aside or rooted out. It shares the task of the education of the world with its sister religions, and it will contribute its eventual portion to "that far-off divine event, Towards which the whole creation moves."

... It does but aim, however, to suggest (in poetic form) juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islām, of its founder, and of its votaries; employing the language of one among them, and thinking with his thoughts, since this alone permits the necessary sympathy.

★ ★ ★

Arnold set out to express "juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islam," and he succeeded, as evidenced in this book. He knew that even the educated class of his time viewed Islam with a jaundiced eye and saw Muslims only as a threat to British soldiers in colonized lands. In this poem on God's Ninety-Nine Names, he succeeds in presenting an Islam that he personally experienced during his time in India. A contemporary of Arnold was Florence Nightingale, an Englishwoman who lived freely among Muslims



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in Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey; indeed, she was honored in Turkey with medals from the Ottoman Caliph for her service to wounded and dying Turkish and Ottoman soldiers during the Crimean War.

Writing as a citizen at the center of colonial power, Arnold sought to educate his compatriots and build bridges where none existed.

Sadly, over a hundred and thirty years later, we find ourselves in the same situation that Arnold faced: the ignorance of Islam even among highly educated Westerners today is palpable in print, media, and daily conversations. Walk into any bookstore, as I often do, and you will find more books critical of Islam, many written by disgruntled ex-Muslims, than books that are a fair and accurate reflection of normative Islam.

But we do have Edwin Arnolds of our time, people of other faiths—such as Karen Armstrong and John Esposito—who are knowledgeable about our religion, its ethos and universal nature, its glory days, and the reality that it is the source of solace for countless souls in an often-soulless world. Among them is the brilliant Sinic scholar, Dr. Thomas Cleary, who very often, in the most unsuspecting places, forces his readers to confront their own prejudices. In his 1993 book, *No Barrier: Unlocking the Zen Koan*, he writes,

Zen Koans are also used for purposes of testing and examining states of mind....

The use of koans to test mentalities requires a certain degree of Zen psychological knowledge to apply, but parallel examples of its operation can be obtained with familiar materials. A simple method uses the prejudices of the environment, casually providing appropriate stimuli to observe whether an individual or group is infected with the habitual prejudices of the cultural environment, or whether evidence is shown of capacity for independent thought and perception.

In a Western milieu, for example, environmental prejudice is easily elicited by reference to Islam. When people with no knowledge of the Qur'an or usages of the Prophet are ready to offer opinions on Islam as fact, this represents the working of conditioned

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bias, not the operation of independent cognition. The inclination to accept unverified opinion simply because of currency or familiarity is a dangerous human weakness that is instrumental in self-deception, and easily exploited for the deception of others. Zen study exposes such fallacies of thought in order to liberate the mind from bondage to the views and attitudes they produce.<sup>B</sup>

One of the great challenges for Muslims today is precisely people's "inclination to accept unverified opinion simply because of currency or familiarity," as every day they face a fusillade of unrelenting media images of Islam and Muslims as violent, vengeful, and filled with hatred for the West. The media traffics in stereotypes, and like all stereotypes, there is some truth to these images of Islam and Muslims. But the stereotype fails abysmally because it does not reflect the perennial teachings of Islam or even the views of the overwhelming majority of Muslims. It also ignores the role that Western imperialism has played in fostering this environment of enmity, whether it be the British Mandate for Palestine, the creation of the nation states in a *divida et impera* colonial policy, or the more recent deadly debacles in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya.

The Islam of the 19th Century that Arnold experienced was almost entirely informed by its mystic tradition, Sufism, which recognizes the divine gift in everyone and everything. Through poetry and literature, among other things, metaphysics permeated traditional Muslim society, and even the common people were steeped in a metaphysical awareness of reality. Eventually, though, the Islamic civilization declined, partly because of the decadence and a loss of rigor in the tradition but also because of the political collapse of Muslim sovereignty that enabled their lands to be conquered by Western colonizers. This spawned certain movements that flourished and began to alter the face of Islam to a point where it would largely be unrecognizable by Muslims of any previous generation.

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B Thomas Cleary, *No Barrier: Unlocking the Zen Koan*. London: Aquarian Press, 1993, xvii-xviii.

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What remains are remnants of these traditions in a post-modern world where much confusion has been sowed by an Islam funded with petro-dollars that perpetuates a sterile, barren, fundamentalist, exclusivist, and puritanical Islam that is anti-intellectual, marginalizes scholarship, and removes from its adherents any appreciation of diversity, history, culture, poetry, and music. It leaves life desiccated and lacking the spiritual nourishment that has always sustained souls in the midst of the hardships of our earthly home.

★ ★ ★

*Pearls of the Faith* is a book that harkens back to a slower time, before the nanosecond, before supersonic travel, before the advent of cyberspace, when handwritten letters took weeks to deliver, and people could sit under a canopy and read light verse about other faiths in faraway lands. It was a time when lettered men and women wrote prose and poetry in the hope that it might engender greater understanding of a richly diverse world in dire need of peaceful co-existence, reciprocal respect, and a deeper knowledge of the evergreen truths hidden in the myriad teachings of our various world faiths.

The love and appreciation of poetry, far more widespread in Sir Edwin Arnold's day, is unfortunately lost on many in our impoverished and illiterate post-modern culture. In light of that lamentable reality, we humbly offer this reprint of a 19th century British poet's effort to help cleanse the doors of perception regarding Islam and hope that it may also help revive a love of such aspirational literature in these troubled times.

Hamza Yusuf

ZAYTUNA COLLEGE



## Author's Preface

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**I**T IS A CUSTOM of many pious Muslims to employ in their devotions a three-stringed chaplet, each string containing thirty-three beads, and each bead representing one of the "ninety-nine names of Allah," whenever this use – among many other religious uses – is made of it. The Korān bids them "Celebrate Allah with abundant celebration," and on certain occasion – such as during the intervals of the Tarāwih night service in Ramadhān – the Faithful pass these ninety-nine beads of the rosary through their fingers, repeating with each "Name of God" an ejaculation of praise and worship. Such an exercise is called Zikr, or "remembrance," and the rosary Masba'hah.

In the following pages of varied verse I have enumerated these ninety-nine "beautiful names," and appended to each – from the point of view of an Indian Muhammedan – some illustrative legend, tradition, record, or comment, drawn from diverse Oriental sources; occasionally paraphrasing (as closely as possible) from the text of the Korān itself, any particular passage containing the sacred Title, or casting light upon it. In this way it seemed possible to present the general spirit of Islām under a new and not unacceptable form; since almost every religious idea of the Korān comes up in the long catalogue of attributes. Tender, as well as terrible; lofty in morality, albeit grim and stern in dogma, the "Perspicuous Book" is still, and must be, replete with interest for Christendom, since, if Islām was born in the Desert, with Arab Sabaeism for its mother and Judaism for its father, its foster-nurse was Eastern Christianity, and Muhammad's attitude towards Christ, and towards the religion which bears His name, is ever one of profound reverence and grateful recognition. Nor are the differences between the older and younger creed really so great as their similitudes in certain aspects. The soul of Islām is its declaration of the unity of God: its heart is the inculcation of an absolute resignation to His will. Not more sublime, therefore, in religious history appears the figure of Paul the tent-maker, proclaiming the "Unknown God" at Athens, than

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that of the camel-driver Muhammad, son of Abdallah and Aminah, abolishing all the idols of the Arabian Pantheon, except their chief – Allah Ta-alah, “God Most High” – and under that ancient and well-received appellation establishing the oneness of the origin, government, and life of the universe. Thereby that marvellous and gifted Teacher created a vast empire of new belief and new civilization, and prepared a sixth part of humanity for the developments and reconciliations which later times will bring. For Islām must be conciliated; it cannot be thrust scornfully aside or rooted out. It shares the task of education of the world with its sister religions, and it will contribute its eventual portion to:

“that far-off divine event,  
Towards which the whole creation moves.”

Composed amid Scotch mountains during a brief summer-rest from politics, and with no library near at hand for references, my book has need to ask indulgence from the learned. It does but aim, however, to suggest (in poetic form) juster thoughts than sometimes prevail of Islām, of its founder, and of its votaries, since this thought permits the necessary sympathy.

I have thus at length finished the Oriental Trilogy which I designed. In my ‘Indian Song of Songs’ I sought to transfer to English poetry a subtle and lovely Sanskrit idyll of the Hindu theology. In my ‘Light of Asia’ I related the story and displayed the gentle and far-reaching doctrines of that great Hindoo prince who founded Buddhism. I have tried to present here, in the simple, familiar, and credulous, but earnest spirit and manner of Islām – and from its own points of view – some of the thoughts and beliefs of the followers of the notable Prophet of Asia.

Edwin Arnold

GLENGYLE, PERTHSHIRE, SCOTLAND,  
SEPTEMBER 1882

PEARLS OF THE FAITH

Allah hath most excellent names, therefore call  
upon Him by the same

QUR'AN, CH. VII, AL-'ARĀF



1 Allah



"Allah!" Bi-'smi-'llah! Say that God is One, Living, Eternal;  
and besides Him none.

## 2 Ar-Rahmān

The Merciful



Say Ar-Rahmān! "The Merciful" Him call;  
For He is full of mercy unto all.

### ❧ THE SINFUL ANGELS

Once on a day, in Paradise,  
Discourse indignant did arise  
Amongst the Angels, seeing how  
The sons of Adam sinned below;  
Albeit Allah's grace had sent  
Prophets with much admonishment.  
'Heedless and guilty race," they cried,  
"Whose penitence is set aside  
At each temptation! Truth and Right  
Ye know not!" Then a wondrous light  
Fell on their brows – a mighty word  
Sounded – the Presence of the Lord  
Spake: "Of your number choose ye two  
To go among mankind and do  
'Justice and Right,' teaching them these."  
Therewith, from those bright companies,

Harūt went and Mārūt<sup>i</sup> went down  
On earth, laying aside their crown  
Of rays, and plumes of rainbow feather;  
And on the judgment-seat together  
Many long years they sate, and wrought  
Just judgment upon each cause brought.  
Until, before that justice-seat  
There came a woman, fair and sweet,  
So ravishing a form and mien  
That great Soharah, who is queen  
Of the third planet, hath not eyes  
As soft, nor mouth made in such wise.  
And one whom she did wrong, besought  
Sentence against her: she had nought  
Of plea, but in her dazzling grace  
Stood fearless in the audience-place:  
Consuming hearts with hot desire  
By subtle Beauty's searching fire.  
Then said Hārūt, forgetting Heaven,  
"Pardon to such must, sure, be given."  
Whispered Mārūt, "If thou wilt be  
Leman of mine, thou shalt go free."  
And for her love those two contended,  
Till the false scene was sorely ended  
With earthquake, and with lightning-flash,  
And rolling thunder's wrathful crash.  
'Midst which the city and the folk  
Passed from their ken, and a voice spoke:  
"Come unto judgment, ye who called  
Allah too merciful!"

Appalled  
Hārūt lay and Mārūt lay prone  
In Paradise, before the Throne;

Hearing that doom of God, which said:  
"Until My trumpet, calls the dead,  
Dwell on earth, where ye have learned  
The just may unto sin be turned."

Merciful One and just! we bless  
Thy name, and crave forgiveness. ❧



### 3 Ar-Rahīm

The Compassionate

Say Ar-Rahīm! call Him "Compassionate",  
For He is pitiful to small and great.

#### SOLOMON AND THE ANT

'Tis written that the serving-angels stand  
Beside God's throne, ten myriads on each hand,  
Waiting, with wings outstretched and watchful eyes,  
To do their Master's heavenly embassies.  
Quicker than thought His high commands they read,  
Swifter than light to execute them speed;  
Bearing the word of power from star to star  
Some hither and some thither, near and far.  
And unto these nought is too high or low,  
Too mean or mighty, if He wills it so;  
Neither is any creature, great or small,  
Beyond His pity; which embraceth all,  
Because His eye beholdeth all which are;  
Sees without search, and counteth without care.  
Nor lies the babe nearer the nursing-place  
Than Allah's smallest child to Allah's grace;  
Nor any ocean rolls so vast that He  
Forgets one wave of all that restless sea.

Thus it is written; and moreover told  
How Gabriel<sup>i</sup>, watching by the Gates of gold,  
Heard from the Voice Ineffable this word  
Of two-fold mandate uttered by the Lord:  
“Go earthward! pass where Solomon hath made  
His pleasure-house, and sitteth there arrayed,  
Goodly and splendid – whom I crowned the king –  
For at this hour My servant doth a thing  
Unfitting: out of Nisibis<sup>iii</sup> there came  
A thousand steeds with nostrils all a-flame  
And limbs of swiftness, prizes of the fight;  
Lo! these are led, for Solomon’s delight,  
Before the palace, where he gazeth now  
Filling his heart with pride at that brave show;  
So taken with the snorting and the tramp  
Of his war-horses, that Our silver lamp  
Of eve is swung in vain, Our warning Sun  
Will sink before his sunset-prayer’s begun;  
So shall the people say, ‘This king, our lord,  
Loves more the long-maned trophies of his sword  
Than the remembrance of his God?’ Go in!  
Save thou My faithful servant from such sin.”

“Also, upon the slope of Arafat<sup>iv</sup>,  
Beneath a lote-tree which is fallen flat,  
Toileth a yellow ant who carrieth home  
Food for her nest, but so far hath she come  
Her worn feet fail, and she will perish, caught  
In the falling rain; but thou, make the way naught,

And help her to her people in the cleft  
Of the black rock.”

Silently Gabriel left  
The Presence, and prevented the king’s sin,  
And help the little ant at entering in.

O Thou whose love is wide and great,  
We praise Thee, “The Compassionate.” ❧

## 4 Al-Malik

The King of all  
the Kings



Call him "Al-Malik," King of all the kings,  
Maker and Master of created things.

### ❧ THE SULTAN AND THE POTTER

The Sultan of Damascus found asleep  
The potter Ibn Solül,  
And bore him to the palace, where he waked  
In garments beautiful.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Consider! if a king should call thee "friend",  
And lead thee to his court,  
Roofed large with lazulite, and paved  
With flow'rs, on green floors wrought;

If he should bid thee sit at meat; and spread  
A table, served so fine  
There lacked not any pleasant food or fruit  
But came at call of thine:



If he hung high a glorious golden lamp  
To shine where thy feet tread;  
And stretched black 'broidered hangings, sown with gems,  
For curtains to thy bed;

If for thy heats he bade soft zephyrs blow;  
Sent, at thy thirst, sweet rains;  
And filled the groves with minstrels, gaily garbed,  
To charm thee with their strains;

If, past the confines of his palace-grounds,  
He showed thee spacious seas,  
Where, wafted o'er the dancing foam, might sail  
Thou and thine argosies:

If, for society in that fair place,  
He gave glad companies,  
Kinsmen and friends and helpmates, and the bliss  
Of beauty's lips and eyes;

With wisdom's scroll to study, and the ways  
Of wondrous living things:  
And lovely pleasure of all ornaments  
That Nature's treasure brings,

Coral and pearl: turkis, and agate stones  
Milk-white or rosy-veined;  
Amber and ivory; jade; shawls wove with gold,  
Scarves with sea-purple stained;

If the king gave thee these, and only wrote  
Upon his inner door:  
"Serve me and honour me and keep my laws,  
And thus live evermore

In better bliss, when ye shall pass hereby, –  
As surely pass ye must:– ”  
Who is there would not praise that monarch’s name  
With forehead in the dust?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Lo! but He doeth this – Allah our King,  
His sky is lazulite;  
His earth is paved with emerald-work: its stores  
Are spread for man’s delight;

His sun by day, His silver stars by night,  
Shine for our sakes, His breeze  
Cools us and wafts our ships; His pleasant lands  
Are girdled with the seas

Which send the rain, and make the crystal bridge  
Whereby man roams at will  
From court to court of Allah’s Pleasure-house;  
Seeing that writing still

Upon the inner gate – which all must pass –  
“Love me and keep my laws  
That ye may live, since there is greater life  
Beyond these darkened doors.”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

If Ibn Solūl, the potter, loved Him not  
Whose kindness was so strong;  
If Ibn Solūl kept not the palace laws,  
Had not that Sultan wrong?

*O sovereign Giver of good things,  
We praise Thee, "Malik", King of kings. ~*

## 5 Al-Quddūs

The "Holy One"

الْقُدُّوسُ

Allah al-Quddūs-the "Holy One" He is;  
But purify thy speech, pronouncing this;

### ❧ GOD'S NAME IN HEAVEN

For even Isrāfīl<sup>v</sup>,  
Who waits in Heaven still  
Nearest the Throne, and hath the voice of sweetness,  
Before his face doth fold  
The wings of feathered gold,  
Saying "Al-Quddūs;" and in supreme completeness

Of lowly reverence stands,  
Laying his angel-hands  
Over his lips, lest Allah's holiest name  
Be lightly breathed on high;  
And that white mystery  
Pass, as if that and others were the same.  
Iblīs<sup>vi</sup>- 'tis written – when  
He heareth among men  
The name of "Allah" spoken, shrinks and flies;

<sup>v</sup> Cf. Qur'an, CXIV. chapter "Of Men."

But at the sound of this,  
Uttered in realms of bliss,  
The Jinns and Angels, in their ranks, arise.

And what believer dares  
Begin his morning prayers  
Without “*wuḍū*”<sup>vi</sup> – th’ ablution? who is seen  
His Qur’an to rehearse  
But hath in mind its verse,  
“Let none me touch, save such as are made  
clean?”

Lo! if with streams or sands  
Ye lave the earnest hands  
Lifted in prayer; and if ye wash the mouth  
Which reads the sacred scroll,  
Dare ye with sullied soul  
Meditate this dread word, that shrines the truth

Of Allah’s purity?  
Bethink! His great eyes see  
The hearts of men unto their inmost core!  
Make clean your hearts within;  
Cast forth each inmost sin;  
Then with bowed brows, say this name, and  
adore.

Forgive, Thou Pure One! – Whom we bless –  
Of our good deeds the sinfulness. ❧

## 6 As-Salām

The Peace



Thou Who art "Peace", and unto peace dost bring,  
Allah-as-Salām! we praise Thee, Judge and King!

### THE PEACE OF PARADISE

When th'unshunnēd Day arriveth, none of men shall  
doubt it come;  
Into Hell some it will lower, and exalt to Heaven some.

When the earth with quakenings quaketh, and the  
mountains crumble flat,  
Quick and dead shall be divided threefold; on this side,  
and that,

The Companions of the right hand<sup>viii</sup> (ah! how joyful  
they will be!)  
The Companions of the left hand (oh! what misery to  
see!)  
Such, moreover, as of old time<sup>ix</sup>, loved the truth and  
taught it well,

First in faith, they shall be foremost in reward: the rest  
to Hell!

But those souls attaining Allah, – ah, the Gardens of  
good cheer  
Kept to lodge them! yea, besides the “Faithful,” many  
will be there.

Lightly lying on soft couches, beautiful with brodered  
gold,  
Friends with friends, they shall be served by youths  
immortal, who will hold

Akwab, abareek – cups and goblets – brimming with  
celestial wine –  
Wine which hurts nor head nor stomach – this and  
fruits of Heaven which shine

Bright, desirable: and rich flesh of what birds they  
relish best;  
Yea, and feasted, there shall soothe them damsels  
fairest, stateliest-

Damsels having eyes of wonder, large black eyes like  
hidden pearls,  
Lulu-'l-maknun, Allah grants them, for sweet love,  
those matchless girls.

Never in that Garden hear they speech of folly, sin, or  
dread;  
Only “Peace” – As-Salām only – that one word for ever  
said,

“Peace! Peace! Peace!’ and the Companions of the right  
hand (ah! those bowers!)

They shall roam in thornless lote-groves, under mawz-  
trees<sup>1</sup> hung with flowers;

Shaded, fed by flowing waters; near to fruits which  
never cloy,

Hanging always ripe for plucking; and at hand the  
tender joy

Of those maids of Heaven, the Houris<sup>2</sup>: lo! to them We  
gave a birth

Specially creating, lo! they are not as the wives of earth;

Ever virginal and stainless, how so often they embrace,  
Always young and loved and loving these are; neither is  
there grace

Like the grace and bliss the black-eyed keep for you in  
Paradise,

O Companions of the right hand! O ye others that were  
wise!<sup>3</sup>

Giver of peace! when comes that day,  
Set us within Thy sight, we pray. ❧

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Qur'an, LVI. chapter “Of the Inevitable.”





## 7 Al-Mu'min

### The Faithful

Al-Mu'min! "Faithful," fast, and just is He,  
And loveth such as live in verity.

#### ❧ THE VERITY OF SAYYID

Ibn Sāwa, Lord of Bahrein, in the field.  
Captured a Sheikh, an Arab of the hills,  
Sayyid-bin-Tayf: and the king's oath was passed  
That each tenth man of all the captives die  
Together with their chieftains, for the war  
Waxed fierce, and hearts of men were turned to  
flame.

So led they Sayyid forth before the camp  
At Azan<sup>xii</sup>: and a eunuch of the guard,  
Savage and black, stood with his haick uprolled  
Back to the armpit, and the scimitar's edge  
Naked to strike.

But suddenly the king  
Inquired, "art thou not he gave me to drink,

Hunting gazelles, before the war began?"

"Yea, I am he!" said Sayyid.

Quoth the king,

"Ask not thy life, but ask some other boon,  
That I may pay my debt."

Sayyid replied,

"Death is not terrible to me who die  
Red with this unbelieving blood of thine:  
But there hath come a first-born in my tent:  
Fain would I see my son's face for a day,  
Before mine eyes are sealed. Lend me my life,  
To hold as something borrowed from thy hand,  
Which I will bring again."

"Ay!" laughed the king,

"If one should answer for it with his own.  
Show me thy hostage!"

"Let me stand his bond,"

Spake one on whom the lot of mercy fell –  
Ishāq of Tayf, a gallant youth and fair –

"I am his sister's son: bind ye my arms,  
And set free Sayyid, that he ride at speed,  
And see his first-born's face, and come again."

So Sayyid went free again, seeking his home.  
But in the camp they mocked that faithful friend,  
Saying, "Lo! as a fool thou diest now,  
Staking thy life upon an Arab's word.  
Why should he haste, to abide the bitter blade?  
Will the scared jackal try the trap again;  
The hawk once limed return unto the snare?  
Cry to the desert-wind to turn and come,  
But call not Sayyid."

Ishāq only smiled,

And said, "He is a Muslim, he will come!"

The days passed, Sayyid come not, and they led  
The hostage forth, for Ishāq now must die;  
But still he smiled, saying, "Till sunset's hour  
Slay me not, for at sunset he will come."

So fell it, for the sun had touched the palms,  
And that black swordsman stood again in act  
To strike, when Sayyid's white mare, galloping in,  
Drew steaming breath before the royal tent;  
And Sayyid, leaping from the saddle, kissed  
His kinsman's eyes, and gently spake to all,  
"Labbayki! I am here."

Then said the king,  
"Never before was known a deed like this  
That one should stake his life upon a word;  
The other ride to death as to a bride.  
Live, and be friends of Ibn Sāwa, but speak!  
Whence learned ye these high lessons?"

Ishāq spake,  
"We are believers in the book which saith,  
'Fulfil your covenants, if ye covenant;  
For God is witness! break no word with men  
Which God hath heard; and surely He hears all.'"<sup>3</sup>

That verse the king bade write in golden script  
Over the palace gate; and he and his  
Followed the Faith.

Ya! Allah-al-Mu'min!  
In truthfulness of act be our faith seen.~

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xvi. chapter "Of the Bee."

## 8 Al-Muhaymin

The Help in Peril



Call Him Muhaymin, "Help in danger's hour,"  
Protector of the true who trust His power.

### THE SPIDER AND THE DOVE

The spider and the dove-what thing is weak  
If Allah makes it strong?  
The spider and the dove! – if He protect,  
Fear thou not foemen's wrong.

From Mecca to Medina fled our Lord,  
The horsemen followed fast;  
Into a cave to shun their murderous rage,  
Muhammad ﷺ, weary, passed.

Quoth Abu Bakr, "If they see, we die!"  
Quoth Ibn Foheir, "Away!"  
The guide Abdallah said, "The sand is deep,  
Those footmarks will betray."

Then spake our Lord, "We are not four, but Five;  
"He Who protects' is here.  
Come! Al-Muhaymin now will blind their eyes;  
Enter, and have no fear."

The band drew nigh; one of the Quraysh cried,  
"Search ye out yonder cleft,  
I see the print of sandalled feet which turn  
Thither, upon the left!"

But when they drew unto the cavern's mouth,  
Lo! at its entering-in,  
A ring-necked desert dove sate on her eggs;  
The mate cooed soft within.

And right athwart the shadow of the cave  
A spider's web was spread;  
The creature hung upon her net at watch;  
Unbroken was each thread.

"By Thammuz' blood," the unbelievers cried,  
"Our toil and time are lost;  
Where doves hatch and the spider spins her snare  
No foot of man hath crossed!"

Thus did a desert bird and spider <sup>xiii</sup> guard  
The blessed Prophet then;  
For all things serve their Maker and their God  
Better than thankless men.

Allah-al-Muhaymin! shield and save  
Us, for his sake within that cave. ~\*~

## 9 Al-‘Azīm

The Mighty-One



Say Al-‘Azīm! He is the Mighty One!  
Praise Him, and hear the great "Verse of the Throne." xiv

### THE THRONE-VERSE

"Allah! there is none other God but He,  
The Living God, the Self-subsistent One;  
Weariness cometh not to Him, nor sleep;  
And whatso is belongs to Him alone  
In heaven and earth; who is it intercedes  
With Him, save if He please? He is aware  
What is before them and what after them,  
And they of all His knowledge nothing share  
Save what He will vouchsafe. His throne's foundation  
Sits splendid, high above the earth and sky.  
Which to sustain gives Him no meditation:  
Mightiest He is, Supreme in Majesty."

Āyatu-'l Kursī! this we Muslims grave  
On polished gem and painted architrave;  
But thou, write its great letters on thy heart,  
Lauding the Mighty One, whose work thou art. ❧

10 Al-Jabbār  
The All-Compelling



The "All-compelling!" golden is that verse,  
Which doth His title – Al-Jabbār – rehearse.

❧ SURA FIFTY-NINE <sup>٥٩</sup>

Sura the nine and fiftieth: "Fear ye God,  
O true believers! and let every soul  
Heed what it doth to-day, because to-morrow  
The same thing it shall find gone forward there  
To meet and make and judge it. Fear ye God,  
For He knows whatsoever deeds ye do.  
Be not as those who have forgotten Him,  
For they are those who have forgot themselves;  
They are the evil-doers: not for such,  
And for the heritors of Paradise,  
Shall it be equal: Paradise is kept  
For those thrice blessed who have ears to hear.



Lo! had we sent "the Book" unto Our hills,  
Our hills had bowed their crests in reverence,  
And opened to the heart their breasts of rock  
To take Heaven's message. Fear ye Him who knows  
Present, and Past, and Future: fear ye Him  
Who is the Only, Holy, Faithful Lord,  
Glorious and good, compelling to His will  
All things, for all things He hath made and rules.

So rule, Al-Jabbār: make our wills  
Bend, though more stubborn than the hills.❦

## 11 Al-Mutakabbir

The Majestic



Al-Mutakabbir! all the heavens declare  
His majesty, who makes them what they are.

### آزَارُ وَأَبْرَاهِيمَ

Āzar<sup>vi</sup>, of Abraham the father, spake  
Unto his son, "Come! and thine offerings make  
Before the gods whose images divine  
In Nimrūd's carved and painted temple shine.  
Pay worship to the sun's great orb of gold;  
Adore the queen-moon's silver state; behold  
Otāred, Moshtari, Sohayl, in their might,  
Those stars of glory, those high lords of light.  
These have we wrought, as fitteth gods alone,  
In bronze and ivory and chiselled stone.  
Obey, as did thy sires, these powers of Heaven  
Which rule the world, throned in the circles seven."

But Abraham said, "Did they not see the sun  
Sink and grow darkened, when the days were done;  
Did not the moon for them, too, wax and wane,  
That they should pay her worship, false and vain?  
Lo! all these stars have laws to rise and set –  
Otāred, Moshtari, Sohayl – wilt thou yet  
Bid me praise gods who humbly come and go,  
Lights that a greater Light hath kindled? No!  
I dare not bow the knee to one of these;  
My Lord is He who (past the sky man sees)  
Waxeth and waneth not, Unchanged of all,  
Him only 'God', Him only 'Great', I call."

Well spak'st thou, Friend of Allah!<sup>xvii</sup> none;  
Is "great" except the Greatest One.~

## 12 Al-Khāliq

The Creator



Praise the "Creator!" He who made us live,  
Life everlasting unto us can give.

### ❧ SIGNS OF THE LORD

By the glorious Book We have sent! do they wonder a  
warner is come  
Out from among themselves? do the misbelievers say  
"This is a marvelous thing! what! when we are dead and  
dust  
To live! to arise! see now, this hope is a hope far away!"

But what the grave shall consume, and what of the man it  
shall leave,  
We know, for a roll is with Us where each soul's order is  
set.  
Will they call the truth a lie when it cometh to them, and  
dwell  
Wrangling and foolish and fearful, confounding the  
matter? But yet

The heaven is above them to see how fair We have builded  
its arch,  
Painted it golden and blue, finished it perfect and clear;  
And the earth how We spread it forth, and planted the  
mountains thereon;  
And made all the manifold trees and the beautiful  
blossoms appear.

Memorials are these to the wise, and a message to him  
who repents;  
Moreover We drop from the clouds the blessing of water,  
the rain,  
Whereby the cool gardens do grow, and the palms  
soaring up to the sky  
With their date-laden branches and boughs, one over the  
other; and grain

To nourish the children of men. Lo! thus We have  
quicken'd dead clay  
On the bosom of the earth, and beneath her so, too, shall  
a quickening be.

★   ★   ★   ★   ★

What! deem they it wearied God create? – that His power  
was spent?  
They are fools, and they darken their eyes to that which He  
willeth them see.  
We have fashioned man, and we know the thoughts of his  
innermost heart;

We are closer to him than his blood, more near than the  
vein of his throat;  
At the right of ye all sits a watcher, a watcher sits at your  
left;  
And whatso each speaketh or thinketh, those two have  
known it and note.

*Al-Khāliq! Fashioner Divine!*  
*Finish Thy work and make us Thine! ❧*



## 13 Al-Bārī'

The Artificer

Al-Bārī'! Moulder of each form and frame,  
Pots praise the Potter, when we speak this name.

### ANGELS' WINGS

Praise be to God, the Designer, Builder of earth and  
of Heaven!

Fashioned His Angels <sup>xviii</sup> He hath, making them  
messengers still;

Two wings to some and four wings to some, and to  
some He hath given

Six and eight silver wings, making what marvels He  
will.

Verily mighty is He, and what bestoweth of blessing  
None can withhold; and none what He withholdeth  
can send;

Children of men! remember the mercies of Allah  
towards ye,

Is there a Maker, save this, is there another such  
Friend?

Nowhere another one, we see,  
Wondrous "Artificer!" like Thee. ~\*~





## 14 Al-Muṣawwir

### The Fashioner

Al-Muṣawwir! the "Fashioner!" say thus;  
Still lauding Him who hath compounded us.

#### THE MAKING OF MAN

When the Lord would fashion men,  
Spake He in the Angels' hearing,  
"Lo! Our will is there shall be  
On the earth a creature bearing  
Rule and royalty. To-day  
We will shape a man from clay."

Spake the Angels, "Wilt Thou make  
Man who must forget his Maker  
Working evil, shedding blood,  
Of Thy precepts the forsaker?  
But Thou knowest all, and we  
Celebrate Thy majesty."  
Answered Allah, "Yea! I know

What ye know not of this making;  
Gabriel! Michael! <sup>xix</sup> Isrāfīl!  
Go down to the earth, and taking  
Seven clods of colours seven,  
Bring them unto Me in Heaven.”

Then those holy Angels three  
Spread their pinions and descended;  
Seeking clods of diverse clay,  
That all colours might be blended;  
Yellow, tawny, dun, black, brown,  
White and red, as we are known.

But the earth spake, sore afraid,  
“Angels! of my substance take not;  
Give me back my dust, and pray  
That the dread Creator make not  
Man, for he will sin, and bring  
Wrath on me and suffering.”

Therefore empty-handed came  
Gabriel, Michael, Isrāfīl,  
Saying, “Lord! Thy earth imploreth  
Man may never on her dwell;  
‘He will sin and anger thee,  
Give me back my clay!’ cried she.”

Spake the Lord to Azrael<sup>xx</sup>,  
“Go thou, who of wing art surest.  
Tell my earth this shall be well;  
Bring those clods, which thou procurest  
From her bosom, unto Me;  
Shape them as I order thee.”

Thus 'tis written how the Lord  
Fashioned Adam for His glory,  
Whom the Angels worshipped,  
All save Iblīs; and this story  
Teacheth wherefore Azrael saith,  
“Come thou!” at man’s hour of death.

Allah! when he doth call us, take!  
We are such clay as Thou did'st make. ❧❧

## 15 Al-Ghaffār

The Forgiver



Al-Ghaffār, the "Forgiver," praise thereby  
Thy Lord who is so full of clemency.

### ABRAHAM'S OFFENCE

Once, it is written, Abraham, "God's Friend,"<sup>xxi</sup>  
Angered his Lord; for there had ridden in  
Across the burning yellow desert-flats  
An aged man, haggard with two days' drouth.  
The water-skin swung from his saddle-fork  
Wrinkled and dry; the dust clove to his lids,  
And clogged his beard; his parched tongue and black  
lips  
Moved to say, "Give me drink," yet uttered nought;  
And that gaunt camel which he rode upon,  
Sank to the earth at entering of the camp,  
Too spent except to lay its neck along  
The sand, and moan.

To whom when they had given  
The cool wet jar, asweat with diamond-drops  
Of sparkling life, that way-worn Arab laved  
The muzzle of his beast, and filled her mouth;  
Then westward turned with blood-shot, worshipping eyes,  
Pouring forth water to the setting orb:  
Next, would have drunk, but Abraham saw, and said,  
"Let not this unbeliever drink, who pours  
God's gift of water forth unto the sun,  
Which is but creature of the living Lord."

But while the man still clutched the precious jar,  
Striving to quaff, a form of grace drew nigh,  
Beauteous, majestic. If he came afoot,  
None knew, or if he glided from the sky.  
With gentle air he filled a gourd and gave  
The man to drink, and Abraham – in wrath  
That one should disobey him in his tents –  
Made to forbid; when full upon him smote  
Eyes of divine light, eyes of high rebuke –  
For this was Michael, Allah's messenger –  
"Lo! God reproveth thee, thou Friend of God!  
Forbiddest thou gift of the common stream  
To this idolater, spent with the heat, –  
Who, in his utmost need, watered his beast,  
And bowed the knee in reverence, ere he drank?  
Allah hath borne with him these threescore years,  
Bestowed upon him corn and wine, and made  
His household fruitful and his herds increase;  
And find'st thou not patience to pity him  
Whom God hath pitied, waiting for the end,  
Since none save He wotteth what end will come,  
Or who shall find the light. Thou art rebuked!  
Seek pardon! for thou hast much need to seek."

Thereat the Angel vanished, as he came;  
But Abraham, with humbled countenance,  
Kissed reverently the heathen's hand, and spake –  
Leading him to the chief seat in the tent –  
“God pardon me, as He doth pardon thee!”

Long-suffering Lord! ah, who should be  
Forgiven, if Thou wert as we? ❧



## 16 Al-Qahhār

The Dominant

Al-Qahhār call Him – “Dominant,” the King,  
Who maketh, knoweth, ruleth everything.

### سُورَةُ الْاَنْعَامِ SURA “OF THE CATTLE”

The “Chapter of the Cattle:”<sup>4</sup> Heaven is whose,  
And whose is earth? Say Allah’s, That did choose  
On His own might to lay the law of mercy.  
He, at resurrection, will not lose

One of His own. What falleth, night or day,  
Falleth by His Almighty word alway.

Wilt thou have any other Lord than Allah,  
Who is not fed, but feedeth all flesh? Say!

For if He visit thee with woe, none makes  
The woe to cease save He; and if He takes  
Pleasure to send thee pleasure, He is Master  
Over all gifts; nor doth His thought forsake

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Qur’an, vi. chapter “Of the Cattle.”

The creatures of the field, nor fowls that fly;  
They are "a people" also: "These, too, I  
Have set," the Lord saith, "in My book of record;  
These shall be gathered to Me by and by."

With Him of all things secret are the keys;  
None other hath them, but He hath; and sees  
Whatever is in land, or air, or water,  
Each bloom that blows, each foam-bell on the seas.

Nor is there any little hidden grain  
Swelling beneath the sod, nor in the main  
Any small fish or shell, nor of the earth  
Green things or dry things upon hill or plain,

But these are written in th' unerring Book:  
And what ye did by day, and when ye took  
Your slumbers, and the last sleep; then to Him  
Is your return, and the account's there! – look!

Al-Qahhār! All-embracing One!  
Our trust is fixed on Thee alone. ❧





## 17 Al-Wahhāb

The Bestower

Praise "the Bestower:" unto all that live  
He giveth, and He loveth those who give.

### ❧ 'ALĪ AND THE ANGELS

The Imam 'Alī, Lion of the Faith,  
have ye not heard his giving? what he had  
The poor had, for he held his gold and goods  
As Allah's almoner. 'Alī it was  
Who in the Mecca mosque at evening prayer –  
Being entreated by some needy one –  
Would not break off, yet would not let the man  
Ask him in vain for what he asked of God,  
Favour and aid; wherefore – amid the words –  
He drew his emerald, carved with Allah's praise,  
From his third finger, giving it; and prayed  
With face unturned.

If he had pieces ten,  
He succoured five score; if one dinar, then  
Into ten dirhems he divided that,

And fed ten "people of the bench."<sup>xxii</sup> Our Lord  
(On whom be peace!) in all men's hearing said,  
"This is the Prince of Givers!"

Once it fell,  
Being sore hungered in his house, he cried,  
"Fāṭimah! thou daughter of the Prophet of God,  
Find me to eat, if thou hast any food."  
And Fāṭimah said, "Father of Hassan! here  
Not a dry date is left – not one – I swear ·  
By Him besides Whom is none other God;  
But in the corner of the tomb I laid  
Our last six dirhems: take them, if thou wilt,  
And buy thee in the market food, and bring  
Fruits for our boys, Hassan and Hussain." Thus  
'Alī departed. On his way he spied  
Two Muslims, of whom one rudely hailed  
The other, crying, "Pay the debt, or come  
Unto the prison where the smiter waits."  
And he who owed had nought, and wept amain,  
Sighing, "Alas the day!" But 'Alī asked,  
"What is thy debt, my brother?" Then he moaned,  
"Six dirhems, for the lack of which the chains  
Must load me." "Nay!" spake 'Alī, "they are here;  
Take them and pay the man, and go in peace."  
So went that debtor free, but 'Alī came  
Empty in hand and belly home again  
Unto his door, where Fāṭimah and the sons,  
Hassan and Hussain, seeing him approach,  
Ran joyous forth, crying, "He bringeth us  
Dates now, and honey, and new camels' milk;  
Soon shall we feast." But when they saw his cloth

Hang void, and troubled eyes, and heard him say,  
"Upon my road I met a poorer man  
Who, for six dirhems, should have borne the chains;  
To him I gave them, and I brought ye nought,"  
Then the lads wept; but Fāṭimah smiled and spake:  
"Well hast thou done, O servant of the Lord!  
Weep not, ye sons of 'Alī, though we fast;  
Who feedeth Allah's children, feasts his own:  
He, the 'Bestower', will provide for us."

But 'Alī turned, heart-sore because his boys  
Lacked meat, and Fāṭimah's lovely eyes were sunk  
Hollow with hunger. "I will go," thought he,  
"Unto the blessed Prophet, for, if one  
Be burdened with a thousand woes, his word  
Dismisses them and makes the sorrow joy."  
So bent he mournful steps thither, to tell  
The Lord Muhammad ﷺ of this strait, when – lo!  
An Arab in mid path encountered him,  
Of noble bearing, with a chieftain's mien,  
Leading a riding-camel by her string,  
Black, with full teeth, the best beast ever foaled.  
"Buy Wurdah! – buy my desert rose," quoth he;  
"One hundred dirhems make her thine, so thou  
Shalt own the best in Hedjaz, or at choice  
Sell her for double money." 'Alī said,  
"The beast is excellent! fain would I buy,  
But have not in my scrip thy price." "Go to,"  
The Sheikh replied; "take her and bring thy gold,  
When Allah pleaseth, to the western gate;  
I will await thee."

'Alī nodded; took  
 The nose-string, turning to the left to seek  
 The camel-merchants that should buy the beast;  
 Whom at the very centre of the khan  
 Another Arab in desert garb,  
 Lordly and gracious like his fellow, met,  
 And quick saluted, saying, "Peace with thee!  
 God send thee favour! wilt thou sell me now  
 Thy riding-camel with the great stag-eyes?  
 Here be three hundred dirhems counted down,  
 Silver and gold, good money! Such an one  
 I sought, but found not, till I saw thee here."  
 "If thou wilt buy," quoth 'Alī, "be it so!"  
 And thereupon the Bedawee counted out  
 Dinars and dirhems – little suns and moons  
 Of glittering gold and silver – in his cloth,  
 And took the beast; but when 'Alī, with one piece  
 Bought food and fruits, and, hastening home again,  
 Heard his lads laugh with joy to see the store  
 Poured forth; – white cakes and dates and amber  
 grapes –  
 And smiled himself to mark Fātimah's soft eyes  
 Gladden; then, having eaten, blessed the Lord,  
 Giver of gifts, "Bestower."  
 So, once more,  
 Made he to go unto the western gate  
 To pay his seller; but upon that street  
 The Prophet met him. Lightly smiled our Lord,  
 (On whom be comfort!) lightly questioned he,  
 Saying, "O 'Alī! who was he did sell  
 Thy riding-camel, and to whom didst thou

sell her again?" Quoth 'Alī, "Only God  
Knoweth, except thou knows!" Spake our Lord,  
"Yea, but I know! That was great Gabriel,  
Chief messenger of Heaven, from who thou  
bought'st;

And he to whom thou sold'st was Isrāfil,  
His heavenly fellow; and that beast did come  
Forth from the pleasure-fields of Paradise,  
And thither back is gone; for – look! my son,  
Allah hath recompensed thee fifty times  
The goodly deed thou didst, giving thine all  
To free the weeping debtor. Oh, He sees  
And measures and bestows; but what is kept,  
Beyond gifts here, for kindly hearts that love,  
God only wotteth, and the Eternal Peace."

*Bestower! grant us grace to see  
Our gain is what we lose for Thee. ~*

## 18 Ar-Razzāq

The Provider



Ar-Razzāq! the "Provider!" thus again  
Praise Him who, having formed thee, doth sustain.

❧ SURA "OF THE FORENOON" » xxiii

By the high dawn  
When the light of the sun is strong!  
By the thick night,  
When the darkness is deep and long!  
He hath not forsook thee, nor hated!  
By His mercies, I say,  
The life which will come shall be better  
Than the life of to-day.

In the latter days  
The Lord thy "Provider" shall give;  
When thou knowest His gift  
Thou wilt not ask rather to live;

Look back! thou wert friendless and frameless,  
He made thee from nought;  
Look back! thou wert blinded and wandering,  
To the light thou art brought!  
Consider! shall Allah forego thee  
Since thus He hath wrought?<sup>5</sup>

The favour of thy Lord perpend,  
And praise His mercies without end. ❧

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xciii. chapter "Of the Forenoon."

## 19 Al-Fattāh

### The Opener



Al-Fattāh! praise the “Opener!” and recite  
The marvels of that “Journey of the Night.”<sup>6</sup> xxiv

#### ❧ PROPHET MUHAMMAD’S ❧ JOURNEY TO HEAVEN

Our Lord Muhammad ❧ lay upon a hill  
Safā, whereby the holy city stands,  
Asleep, wrapped in a robe of camels’ wool.  
Dark was the night – that Night of grace – and still;  
When all the seven spheres, by God’s commands,  
Opened unto him, splendid and wonderful!

For Gabriel, softly lighting, touched his side,  
Saying, “Rise, thou enwrapped one! come and see  
The things which be beyond. Lo! I have brought  
Burāq, the horse of swiftness; mount and ride!”  
Milk-white that steed was, with embroidery  
Of pearls and emeralds in his long hair wrought.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Qur’an, xvii. chapter “Of the Night Journey.”



Hooved like a mule he was, with a man's face;  
His eyes gleamed from his forelock, with a star  
Of lucent hyacinth; the saddle-cloth  
Was woven gold, which priceless work did grace:  
The lightning goeth not so fast or far  
As those broad pinions which he fluttered forth.

One heel he smote on Safā, and one heel  
On Sinai – where the dint is to this day.  
Next at Jerusalem he neighed. Our Lord,  
Descending with th' Archangel there, did kneel  
Making the midnight prayer; afterwards they  
Tethered him to the Temple by a cord.

"Ascend!" spake Gabriel; and behold! there fell  
Out of the sky a ladder bright and great,  
Whereby, with easy steps, on radiant stairs,  
They mounted – past our earth and heaven and hell –  
To the first sphere, where Adam kept the gate,  
Which was of vaporous gold and silvery squares.

Here thronged the lesser Angels: some took charge  
To fill the clouds with rain and speed them round,  
And some to tend live creatures; for what's born  
Hath guardians there in its own shape: a large  
Beauteous white cock crowed matins, at the sound  
Cocks in a thousands planet hailed the morn.

Unto the second sphere by that white slope  
Ascended they, whereof Noah held the key;  
And two-fold was the throng of Angels here;  
But all so dazzling glowed its fretted cope,  
Burning with beams, Muhammad ﷺ could not see  
What manner of celestial folk were there.

The third sphere lay a thousand years beyond  
If thou should'st journey as the sun-ray doth,  
But in one Fātiḥah<sup>xv</sup> clomb they thitherward.  
David and Solomon in union fond  
Ruled at the entrance, keeping Sabaoth  
Of ceaseless joy. The void was paven hard

With paven work of rubies – if there be  
Jewels on earth to liken unto them  
Which had such colour as no goldsmith knows –  
And here a vast Archangel they did see,  
“Faithful of God” his name, whose diadem  
Was set with peopled stars; wherefrom arose

Lauds to the glory of God, filling the blue  
With lovely music, as rose-gardens fill  
A land with essences; and young stars, shaking  
Tresses of lovely light, gathered and grew  
Under his mighty plumes, departing still  
Like ships with crews and treasure, voyage-making.

So came they to the fourth sphere, where there sate  
Enoch, who never tasted death; and there  
Behind its portal awful Azrael writes;  
The shadow of his brows compassionate  
Made night across all worlds; our Lord felt fear,  
Marking the stern eyes and the hand which smites.

For always on a scroll he sets the names  
Of new-born beings, and from off the scroll  
He blotteth who must die; and holy tears  
Roll down his cheeks, recording all our shames  
And sins and penalties; while of each soul  
Munkar and Nakīr<sup>xvi</sup> reckon the arrears.

Next, at the fifth sphere's entry, they were 'ware  
Of a door built in sapphire, having graven  
Letters of the flashing fire, the faith unfolding,  
"THERE IS NO GOD SAVE GOD." Aaron sate there  
Guarding the "region of the wrath of Heaven;"  
And Isrāfil behind, his trumpet holding,

His trumpet holding – which shall wake the dead  
And slay the living – all his cheeks puffed out,  
Bursting to blow; for none knows Allah's time,  
Nor when the word of judgment shall be said:  
And darts, and chains of flame, lay all around,  
Terrible tortures for th' ungodly's crime.

When to the sixth sphere passed they, Moses sped  
Its bars of chrysoprase, and kissed our Lord,  
And spake full sweet, "Prophet of Allah! thou  
More souls of Ismael's tribes to truth hast led,  
Than I of Ishāq's." Here the crystal sword  
Of Michael gave the light they journeyed through.

But at the seventh sphere that light which shone  
Hath not an earthly name, nor any voice,  
Can tell its splendour, nay, nor any ear  
Learn, if it listened; only he alone  
Who saw it, knows how there th' elect rejoice,  
'Īsā, and Ibrāhīm, and the souls most dear.

And he, the glorious regent of that sphere,  
Had seventy thousands heads; and every head  
As many countenances; and each face  
As many mouths; and in each mouth there were  
Tongues seventy thousand, whereof each tongue said,  
Ever and ever, "Praise to Allah! praise!"

Here, at the bound, is fixed that lotus-tree  
SEDRA, which none among the Angels pass;  
And not great Gabriel's self might farther wend:  
Yet, led by presences too bright to see,  
Too high to name, on paths like purple glass  
Our Lord Muhammad ﷺ journeyed to the end.

Alone! alone! through hosts of Cherubim  
Crowding the infinite void with whispering vans,  
From splendour unto splendour still he sped;  
Across the "Lake of Gloom" they ferried him,  
And then the "Sea of Glory:" mortal man's  
Heart cannot hold the wonders witnessèd.

So to the "Region of the Veils" he came,  
Which shut all times off from eternity,  
The bars of being where thought cannot reach:  
Ten thousands thousand are they, walls of flame  
Lambent with loveliness and mystery,  
Ramparts of utmost heaven, having no breach.

Then he saw GOD! our Prophet saw THE THRONE! –  
O Allah! let these weak words be forgiven! –  
Thou, the Supreme, "the Opener," spake at last;  
The Throne! the Throne! he saw; – our Lord alone!  
Saw it and heard! – but the verse falls from heaven  
Like a poised eagle, whom the lightning blast.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

And Gabriel waiting by the tree he found;  
And Borak, tethered to the Temple porch;  
He loosed the horse, and 'twixt its wings ascended.  
One hoof it smote on Zion's hallowed ground,  
One upon Sinai; and the day-star's torch  
Was not yet fading when the journey ended.

Al-Fattāh! "Opener!" we say  
Thy name, and worship Thee always. ❧

## 20 Al-‘Alīm

The All-Knower



Al-‘Alīm! the “All-Knower!” by this word  
Praise Him Who sees th’unseen, and hears th’unheard.

### THE MU’AQIBĀT

If ye keep hidden your mind, if ye declare it loud,  
Equally God hath perceived, equally known is each  
thought:

If on your housetops ye sin, if in dark chambers ye  
shroud,  
Equally God hath beheld, equally judgment is  
wrought.

He, without listening, doth know how many  
breathings ye make;  
Numbereth the hairs of your head, wotteth the beats  
of your blood;  
Heareth the feet of the ant when she wanders by  
night in the brake;

Counteth the eggs of the snake and the cubs of the  
wolf in the wood.  
Mute the Mu'aqqibāt<sup>7</sup> sit this side and that side of  
men,  
One on the right noting good, and one on the left  
noting ill;  
Each hath those Angels beside him who write with  
invisible pen  
Whatso he doeth, sayeth, or thinketh, recording it  
still.

Vast is the mercy of God, and when a man doeth  
aright,  
Glad is the right-hand Angel, and setteth it quick  
on the roll;  
Ten times he setteth it down in letters of heavenly  
light,  
For one good deed ten deeds, and a hundred for ten  
on the scroll.

But when one doeth amiss the right-hand Angel  
doth lay  
His palm on the left-hand Angel and whispers,  
"Forbear thy pen!  
Peradventure in seven hours the man may repent  
him and pray;  
At the end of the seventh hour, if it must be,  
witness it then."<sup>8</sup>

Al-'Alīm! Thou Who knowest all,  
With hearts unveiled on Thee we call. ~\*~

<sup>7</sup> These are the "Successors," or Angels of Record, who relieve each other in the duty of registering human action, &c.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xiii. chapter "Of Thunder."

## 21 Al-Qābiḍ

The Closer

جَدَّ جَبَلَدُ  
الْقَابِضُ

Yakbuzu wa Yabsutu! heaven and hell  
He closeth and uncloseth – and doth well!<sup>9</sup>

### EVIL DEEDS

In gold and silk and robes of pride  
An evil-hearted monarch died;  
Pampered and arrogant his soul  
Quitted the grave. His eyes did roll  
Hither and thither, deeming some  
In that new world should surely come  
To lead his spirit to a seat  
Of state, for kingly merit meet.  
What saw he? 'twas a hag so foul  
There is no Afrit, Jinn or Ghoul  
With countenance as vile, or mien  
As fearful, and such terrors seen

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."



In the fierce voice and hideous air,  
Blood-dripping hands and matted hair.  
"Allah have mercy!" cried the king,  
"Whence and what art thou, hateful thing?"  
"Dost thou not know – who gav'st me birth?"  
Replied the form; "thy sins on earth  
In me embodied thus behold.  
I am thy wicked work! unfold  
Thine arms and clasp me, for we two  
In hell must live thy sentence through."

Then with a bitter cry, 'tis writ,  
The king's soul passed unto the pit.

*Al-Qābiḍ! so He bars the gate  
Against the unregenerate. ❧*

## 22 Al-Bāsiṭ

The Uncloser



Yet He who shuts the gate, just wrath to wreak,  
Unbars it, full of mercy, to the meek.

### ❧ GOOD DEEDS

There died upon the Mirāj night,  
A man of Mecca, Amru hight;  
Faithful and true, patient and pure,  
Had been his years; he did endure  
In war five spear-wounds, and in peace  
Long journeying for his tribe's increase;  
And ever of his gains he gave  
Unto poor brethren – kind and brave:  
But these forsook, and age and toil  
Drained the strong hearts as flames drink oil;  
Till, lone and friendless, grey and spent –  
A thorn-tree's shadow for his tent,  
And desert sand for dying-bed – Amru the camel-man  
lay dead.

What is it that the 'Hadith<sup>xxvii</sup> saith?  
Even while the true eyes glazes in death,  
And the warm heart wearied, and beat  
The last drum of its long defeat,  
An Angel, lighting on the san,  
Took Amru's spirit by the hand,  
And gently spake, "Dear brother, come!  
A sore road thou didst journey home;  
But life's dry desert thou hast passed,  
And Zamzam<sup>xxviii</sup> sparkles nigh at last."  
Then with a swift flight those twain did rise  
Unto the gates of Paradise,  
Which opened, and the Angel gave  
A golden granate, saying, "Cleave  
This fruit, my brother!" But its scent  
So heavenly seemed, and so intent,  
So rapt was Amru, to behold  
The great fruit's rind of blushing gold  
And emerald leaves – he dared no touch,  
Murmuring, "O Mālik! 'tis too much  
That I am here, with eyes so dim,  
And grace all fled." Then bade they him  
Gaze in the stream which glided stilly,  
'Mid water-roses and white lily,  
Under those lawns and smiling skies  
That make delight in Paradise;  
When, lo! the presence imaged there  
Was of such comeliness, no peer  
Among those glorious Angels stood  
To Amru, mirrored in the flood.

"It is it I?" he cried in gladness,  
"Am I so changed from toil and sadness?"  
"This was thy hidden self," replied  
The Angels. "So shalt thou abide  
By our bright river evermore;  
And in that fair fruit's secret core –  
Which on the Tree of Life hath grown –  
Another marvel shall be shown.  
Ah, happy Amru! cleave!" He clove:  
Sweet miracle of bliss and love!  
Forth from the pomegranate there grew,  
As from its bud a rose breaks through,  
A lovely, stately, lustrous maid,  
Whose black orbs long silk lashes shade,  
Whose beauty was so rich to see  
No verse can tell it worthily;  
Nor is there found in any place  
One like her for the perfect grace  
of soft arms wreathed and ripe lips moving  
In accents musical and loving;  
For thus she spake: "Peace be to thee,  
My Amru!" Then, with quick cry, he:  
"Who art thou, blessed one? what name  
Wearest thou? teach my tongue to frame  
This worship of my heart." Said she,  
"Thy good deeds gave me being: see,  
If in my beauty thou hast pleasure,  
How the Most High doth truly treasure  
Joy for his servants. Murzieh I –  
She that doth love and satisfy –

And I am made by Allah's hand  
Of ambergris and musk, to stand  
Beside thee, soothing thee, and tending  
In comfort and in peace unending."  
So hand in hand, 'tis writ, they went,  
To those bright bowers of high content.

*Al-Bāsiṭ!* thus He opens wide  
His mercies to the justified. ❧

## 23 Al-Khāfid

The Abaser



Al-Khāfid! the "Abaser!" praise hereby  
Him Who doth mock at earthly majesty.

### ❧ NIMRŪD AND THE GNAT

Heard ye of Nimrūd?<sup>xix</sup> Cities fell before him;  
Shinar, from Accad to the Indian Sea,  
His garden was; as God, men did adore him;  
Queens were his slaves, and kings his vassalry.

Eminent on his car of carven brass,  
Through foeman's blood nave-deep he drave his wheel;  
And not a lion in the river-grass  
Could keep its shaggy fell from Nimrūd's steel.  
But he scorned Allah, schemed a tower to invade Him;  
Dreamed to scale Heaven, and measure might with God;  
Heaped high the foolish clay wherefrom We made him,  
And built thereon his seven-fold house of the clod.

Therefore, the least Our messengers among,  
We sent; a grey gnat dancing in the reeds:  
Into his ear she crept, buzzing, – and stung.  
So perished mighty Nimrūd and his deeds.

O Thou Abaser of all pride!  
Mighty Thou art, and none beside. ❧

## 24 Ar-Rāfiʿ

The Exalter



Ar-Rāfiʿ! the "Exalter!" laud Him so  
Who loves the humble and lifts up the low.

### ❧ ALLAH'S PROPHETS

Whom hath He chosen for His priests and preachers,  
Lords who were eminent, or men of might?  
Nay, but consider how He seeks His teachers,  
Hidden, like rubies unaware of light.

Ur of Chaldees! what chance to discover  
Th' elect of Heaven in Āzar's leathern tent?  
But Allah saw His child, and friend, and lover,  
And Abraham was born, and sealed, and sent.

The babe committed to th' Egyptian water!  
Knew any that the tide of Nilus laved  
The hope of Israel there? yet Pharoah's daughter  
Found the frail ark, and so was Moses saved.



Low lies the Syrian town behind the mountain  
Where Mary, meek and spotless, knelt that morn,  
And saw the splendid Angel by the fountain,  
And heard his voice, "Lord 'Īsā shall be born!"

Nay, and Muhammad (blessed may he be!),  
Abdallah's and Aminah's holy son,  
Whom black Ḥalīmah<sup>xxx</sup> nursed, the Bedawee,  
Where lived a lonelier or a humbler one?

Think how he led the camels of Khadījah,  
Poor, but illumined by the light of Heaven;  
Mightier than Noah, or Enoch, or Elijah,  
Our holy Prophet, to Arabia given.

Man knew him not, wrapped in his cloth, and weeping  
Lonely on Ḥirā'<sup>xxxi</sup> all that wondrous night;  
But Allah for His own our Lord was keeping:  
"Rise, thou enwrapped one!" Gabriel spake, "and write."

Save God there is none high at all,  
Nor any low whom He doth call. ~\*~

## 25 Al-Mu'izz

The Honourer



*Al-Mu'izz! by this title celebrate  
The "Honourer" Whose favour maketh great.*

❧ SURA "OF IMRAN'S FAMILY"

Say "God," say "Lord of all!  
Kingdoms and kings Thou makest and unmakest,  
This Thou takest, that one Thou forsakest;  
Alike are great and small;  
Into Thy hand they fall."

"In Thy dread hand they rest;  
Their nights and days, their waking and their sleeping,  
Their birth, and life, and death lie in Thy keeping;  
'Be thus' to each Thou say'st,  
And thus to be is best,

“Though it seem good or ill.  
Islam! – to Thee our souls we do resign,  
Turning our faces to the blessed shrine;  
Seeking no honour still  
Save from Thy will.”<sup>10</sup>

Al-Mu‘izz! only this we pray  
To learn will and to obey. ❧

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Qur’an, iii. chapter “Of Imran’s Family.”

## 26 Al-Mudhill

The Leader Astray



O, Al-Mudhill! what if it be Thy will,  
Having made man, to lead him unto ill!

### ❧ GOD'S WILL AND FREE-WILL

Saith the Perspicuous Book: "All things which be are of  
God;  
Neither, except by His word, falleth a leaf to the  
ground:  
If He will open He openeth, and whom He hath blinded  
He blindeth,  
Leading, misleading; to none liable, blameable,  
bound."<sup>11</sup>

Saith the Perspicuous Book: "Tied on the neck of a man  
Hangeth the scroll of his fate, not a line to be gainsaid  
or grudged;  
When the trumpet of Isrāfil thunders, the Angels will  
show it and say,  
Read there what thine own deeds have written; thyself  
by thyself shall be judged."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xvii. chapter "Of the Night Journey."

Wilt thou be wiser than God Who knoweth beginning and  
end?

Wilt thou be juster than He whose balance is turned by a  
sigh?

He sayeth, "It shall not be equal for the doers of right and  
wrong."

"It shall not be equal," He sayeth, "for them that accept  
and deny."<sup>13</sup>

*Al-Mudhill! lead us not astray!*

*Teach us to find the perfect way.* ❧

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Qur'an, *eodem loco*.

## 27 As-Samī<sup>c</sup>

The All-Hearing



As-Samī<sup>c</sup>! O Thou Hearer! none can be  
So far, his crying doth not come to Thee.

### ❧ A SHEPHERD'S PRAYER

Writes in his Mesnevi, Jalāl ad-Dīn:  
There came a man of Yaman, poor and old,  
To Mecca, making pilgrimage; untaught,  
A shepherd of the hills. Humble he trod  
The six mīqāt,<sup>xxxii</sup> the stages of the Hajj;  
Humbly indued the iḥrām, garb of faith  
Which hath no seam; made due ablutions, kissed  
The black stone; then three times with hastening feet  
Circled the Kaabah, and four times paced  
With slackened gait the ṭawāf, as is due,  
(For such observances the Mollah taught).  
But, when he bowed before the Holy Place,  
Thus brake his soul from him, knowing no prayer,  
Full of God's love, though ignorant of God:

“O Master! O my Sheikh! where tarriest Thou?  
Show me Thy face that I may worship Thee,  
May toil Thy servant, which I am in heart:  
Ah! let me sew Thy robes, anoint Thine hair,  
Wash Thy soiled robes, and serve Thee daily up  
My fresh she-goat’s freshest milk – I love Thee so!  
Where hidest Thou, that I may kiss Thine hand,  
Chafe Thy dear feet, and ere Thou takest rest –  
In the gold sky, beside Thy sun, belike,  
Among the soft-spread fleeces of Thy clouds –  
Sweep out Thy chamber, O my joy, my King!”

Which hearing, they who keep the shrine, incensed,  
Had haled him to the gateway, crying, “Dog!  
What blasphemy is this thou utterest,  
Saying such things of Him That hath no needs  
Of nourishment, nor clothing, nor repose,  
Nor hands, nor feet, nor any form or frame:  
That thou, base keeper of the silly herd,  
Shouldst proffer service to the All-Powerful?  
Meet were it that we stoned thee dead with stones,  
Who art accursed and injurious.  
Begone! these holy walls are not for thee.”

So, sore abashed, the shepherd made to go,  
Silent and weeping; but our Prophet ﷺ marked,  
And with mild eyes smiled on the man; then spake  
To those that drave him forth: “Ye, when ye pray  
Outside this holy place, in distant lands,  
Whither turn ye your faces?” Each one said,  
“Unto the Kaabah.” “And when ye pray,

Within the blessed precincts, pilgrims here,  
Which way lies Mecca?" "All is sacred here,"  
They answered, "and it matters nought which way."  
"Lo! now ye reason well," replied our Lord;  
"Inside the Kaabah it matters nought  
Whither men turn; and in the secret place  
Of perfect love for God, words are as breath  
And will is all. This simple shepherd's prayer  
Came unto Allah's ears clearer than yours,  
Nathless his ignorance, because his heart –  
Not tongue, not understanding – uttered it.  
make room for God's poor lover nighest me;  
Good fellowship hath any man with him  
To whom Heaven's ear as quick inclines itself  
As doth a mother's when her babe lisps love."

Then they were sore ashamed in that hour.

Hearer of hearts! As-Samī'! so  
Our love inspire, and Thine bestow. ❧





## 28 Al-Baṣīr

The All-Seeing

Al-Baṣīr! O Thou Seer! great and small  
Live in Thy vision, which embraceth all.

### ❧ AZRAEL AND THE INDIAN PRINCE

Were it one wasted seed of water-grass,  
Blown by the wind, or buried in the sand,  
He seeth and ordaineth if it live;  
Were it a wild bee questioning honey-buds,  
He seeth if she find, and how she comes  
On busy winglets to her hollow tree.  
The seeing of His eyes should not be told,  
Though all the reeds in all the earth were cut  
To writing-sticks, and all the seven seas  
Were seven times multiplied, flowing with ink,  
And seventy Angels wrote. He beholds all  
Which was, or is, or will be: yea, with Him  
Is present vision of the five secret things:

The day of Judgement; and the times of rain;  
The child hid in the womb – its quickening,  
And whether male or female; – what will fall  
To-morrow (as ye know what did befall  
Yesterday); and where every man shall die.<sup>14</sup>

“Where every man shall die.” Al Beidhawi  
Presenteth how there sate with Solomon  
A prince of India, and there passed them by  
Azrael, Angel of Death, on shadowy plumes;  
With great eyes gazing earnestly, as one  
Who wonders, gazing. And, because the prince  
Sate with the king, he saw what the king saw,  
The Jinns and Angels, and saw Azrael  
Fixing on him those awful searching eyes.  
“What name, I pray thee, wears yon messenger?”  
So asked he of the king; and Solomon  
Made answer, “It is Azrael, who calls  
The souls of men.” “He seemed,” whispered the prince,  
“To have an errand unto me; – bid now  
That one among thy demon ministers  
Waft me, upon the swiftest wing that beats,  
To India, for I fear him.” Solomon  
Issued command, and a swift Jinn sprang forth  
Bearing the prince aloft, so that he came  
To Coromandel, ere the fruit – which fell  
Out of the fig – had touched the marble floor.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxxi. chapter “Of Luqmān.”

Thereupon Azrael said to Solomon,  
"I looked earnestly upon the man  
In wonder, for my Lord spake, 'Take his soul  
In India;' yet behold he talked with thee  
Here in Judaea! Now, see! he hath gone  
There were it was commanded he should die."  
Then followed Azrael. In that hour the prince  
Died of a hurt, sitting in India.

With Thee, Lord, be the time and place,  
So that we die in Thy dear grace. ~

## 29 Al-Hakam

The Judge of All



Al-Hakam! think upon the Day of Doom.  
And fear "the Judge" before Whom all must come.

### THE LAST DAY

When the sun is withered up,  
And the stars from Heaven roll;  
When the mountains quake,  
And let ye stray your she-camels,<sup>xxxiii</sup> gone ten months in foal;  
When wild beasts flock  
With the people and the cattle  
In terror, in amazement,  
And the seas boil and rattle;  
And the dead souls  
For their bodies seek;  
And the child vilely slain  
Is bid to speak,  
Being asked, "Who killed thee, little maid?"<sup>xxxiv</sup>  
Tell us his name!"

While the books are unsealed,  
 And the crimson flame  
 Flayeth the skin of the skies,  
 And Hell breaks ablaze;  
 And Paradise  
 Opens her beautiful gates to the gaze; –  
 Then shall each soul  
 Know the issues of the whole,  
 And the balance of its scroll.<sup>15</sup>  
 Shall We swear by the stars  
 Which fade away?  
 By the Night drowned in darkness,  
 By the dead Day?  
 We swear not! a true thing is this;  
 It standeth sure,  
 He saw it and he heard<sup>xxxv</sup>, and Our word  
 Will endure!

★        ★        ★        ★        ★        ★

When the sky cleaves asunder,  
 And the stars  
 Are scattered; and in thunder  
 All the bars  
 Of the sea burst, and all the graves are emptied  
 Like chests upturned,  
 Each soul will see her doings, done and undone,  
 And what is earned.  
 The smiting, the smiting  
 Of that Day!

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxi. chapter "Of the Folding Up."

The horror, the splendour,  
Who will say?<sup>16</sup>  
The Day when none shall answer for his brother;  
The Day which is with God, and with none other.

*Al-Hakam! Judge! Save by Thy power,  
Who might abide that awful hour? ❦*

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."



30 Al-‘Adl

The Just Lord

Al-‘Adl! O “Just Lord!” we magnify  
Thy righteous Law, which shall the whole world try.

#### ❧ SURA “OF JONAS”

God will roll up, when this world’s end approacheth,  
The broad blue spangled hangings of the sky,  
Even as As-Sigill<sup>17</sup> rolleth up his record,  
And seals and binds it when a man doth die.

Then the false worshippers, and what they follow,  
Will to the pit, like “stones of hell,” descend;  
But true believers shall hear the Angels saying,  
“This is your day; be joyous without end.”<sup>18</sup>

In that hour dust shall lie on many faces,  
And many faces shall be glad and bright;<sup>19</sup>  
Ye who believe, trust and be patient always,  
Until God judges, for He judges right.<sup>20</sup>

Give us to pass before Thy throne  
Among the number of Thine own! ❧

<sup>17</sup> A name of the Angel of Registration.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Qur’an, xxi. chapter “Of the Prophets.”

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Qur’an, lxxx. chapter “Of the Frown.”

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Qur’an, x. chapter “Of Jonas.”

## 31 Al-Laṭīf

The Gracious One



Dread is His wrath, but boundless is His grace,  
Al-Laṭīf! Lord! show us Thy "favouring" face!

### سُورَةُ الْاٰزِیْمَةِ SURA "OF COUNSEL"

Most quick to pardon sins is He:  
Who unto God draws near  
One forward step, God taketh three  
To meet, and quit his fear.

If ye will have of this world's show,  
God grants, while Angels weep;  
If ye for Paradise will sow,  
Right noble crops ye reap.<sup>21</sup>

Ah, Gracious One, we toil to reap:  
The soil is hard, the way is steep! ❧

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xlii. chapter "Of Counsel."



الْحَبِيبِ  
وَجَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

## 32 Al-Khabīr

He who is Aware

Al-Khabīr! Thou Who art "aware" of all,  
By this name also for Thy grace we call.

### ❧ PROPHET MUHAMMAD ﷺ IN THE CEMETERY

One morning in Medina walked our Lord  
Among the tombs: glad we the dawn, and broad  
On headstones and on footstones sunshine lay;  
Earth seemed so fair, 'twas hard to be away.  
"O people of the grave!" Muhammad ﷺ said,  
"Peace be with you! Your caravan of dead  
Hath passed the defile, and we living ones  
Forget what men ye were, of whom the sons,  
And what your merchandise and where ye went;  
But Allah knows these things! Be ye content  
Since Allah is 'aware.' Ah! God forgive  
Those that are dead, and us who briefly live."

Yea! pardon, Lord, since Thou dost know  
Tomorrow, now, and long ago. ❧

الحمد لله  
الذي هدانا لهذا  
ما كنا لنهتدي لولا  
هدى الله لنا

١٤٢٥

محمد  
صلى الله عليه وسلم



## 33 Al-Halīm

The Clement

Al-Halīm! "Clement" is our Lord above;  
Magnify Allah by this name of love.

### THE DHARRA AND THE DATE-STONE

Ye know the ant that creeps upon the fig,  
The dharra, made so small,  
Until she moveth in the purple seeds  
She is not seen at all.

If, on judgment-day, holding the scales –  
When all the trial's done –  
The Angle of the Balance crieth, "Lord!  
The good deeds of this one

Outweigh his evil deeds, justly assessed,  
By half one dharra's weight;"  
Allah will say, "Multiply good to him,  
And open Heaven's gate!"

Not if thy work be worth a date-stone's skin  
Shall it be overpast;  
Thus it is written in the Sacred Book,<sup>22</sup>  
Thus will it be at last.

Faithful and just, Al-Ḥalīm! we  
Take refuge in Thy clemency. ❧

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



34 Al-‘Azīz

The Strong and  
Sovereign One

Al-‘Azīz! “Strong and Sovereign” God, Thy hand  
Is over all Thy works, holding command.

﴿ SURA “OF AL-AḤQĀF”

Maker of all ye truly call the Strong and Sovereign  
One,  
Yet have ye read that verse which saith whereto His  
work was done?  
Open “the Book,” and, heedful, look what weighty  
words are given  
(The Chapter of Al-Aḥqāf) concerning Earth and  
Heaven.

“The Heavens and earth,” Al-Aḥqāf<sup>xxxvi</sup> saith, “and  
whatso is between,  
Think ye that We made these to be, and then – not to  
have been?

Think ye We fashioned them in jest, without their  
times, and plan,  
And purpose? Nay! accurst are they who judge of  
God by man."<sup>23</sup>

O Higher, Wiser, than we know,  
Let not Thy creatures judge Thee so. ❧

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xlv. chapter "Of Al-Aḥqāf."



## 35 Al-Ghafūr

### The Pardoner

He is the "Pardoner," and his Scripture hath –  
"Paradise is for them that check their wrath,  
And pardon sins; so Allah doth with souls;  
He loveth best him who himself controls."<sup>24</sup>

#### ❧ HASSAN'S SLAVE

Know ye of Hassan's slave? Hassan the son  
Of 'Alī. In the camp of Ras-al-hadd  
He made a banquet unto sheikhs and lords,  
Rich dressed and joyous; and a slave bore round,  
Smoking with new-cooked pillaw, Badhan's dish  
Carved from rock-crystal, with the feet in gold,  
And garnets round the rim; but the boy slipped  
Against the tent-rope, and the precious dish  
Broke into shards of beauty on the board,  
Scalding the son of 'Alī. One guest cried,

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

"Dog! wert thou mine, for this thing shouldst thou  
howl!"

Another, "Wretch! thou meritest to die."

And yet another, "Hassan! give me leave  
To smite away this swine's head with my sword!"

Even Hassan's self was moved; but the boy fell  
Face to the earth and cried, "My lord! 'tis writ,  
'Paradise is for them that check their wrath.'"

"'Tis writ so," Hassan said; "I am not wroth."

"My lord!" the boy sobbed on, "also 'tis writ,  
'Pardon the trespasser.'"

Hassan replied,  
"Tis written – I remember – I forgive."

"Now is the blessing of the Most High God  
On thee, dear master!" cried the happy slave,

"For He – 'tis writ – 'loves the beneficent.'"

"Yea! I remember, and I thank thee, slave,"

Quoth Hassan; – "better is one noble verse  
Fetched from 'the Book,' than the gold and crystal  
brought

From Yaman's hills. Lords! he hath marred the dish,  
But mended fault with wisdom. See, my slave!

I give thee freedom, and this purse to buy  
The robe and turban of a Muslim freed."

*Al-Ghafūr! pardon us, as we*

*Forgive a brother's injury. ❦*





## 36 Ash-Shakūr

The Grateful

"Grateful"- Ash-Shakūr – is He; praise Him so  
Who thanketh men for that He did bestow.

### سُورَةُ الْكَافِرَاتِ SURA "OF AL-KAUTHAR"

So much hast thou of thy hoard  
As thou gavest to thy Lord;  
Only this will bring thee in  
Usance rich and free from sin:  
Send thy silver on before,  
Lending to His sick and poor.  
Every dirhem dropped in alms  
Touches Allah's open palms,  
Ere it fall into the hands  
Of thy brother. Allah stands  
Begging of thee, when thy brother  
Asketh help. Ah! if another  
Proffered thee, for meat and drink,

Food upon Al-Kauthar's<sup>xxvii</sup> brink,<sup>25</sup>  
 Shining Kauthar which doth flow  
 Sweet as honey, cool as snow,  
 White as milk, and smooth as cream,  
 Underneath its banks, which gleam –  
 Green and golden chrysolite,  
 In the Gardens of delight,  
 Whence who drinks never again  
 Tasteth sorrow, age or pain –  
 Who would not make merchandise,  
 Buying bliss in Paradise,  
 Laying up his treasure where  
 Stores are safe and profits clear?  
 But ye lend at lower cost,  
 Whilst Ash-Shakūr offers most,  
 Good returning seven times seven,  
 Paying gifts of earth with Heaven.

Allah, Who dost reward so well,  
 What maketh man in sin to dwell! ~\*~

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Qur'an, cviii.

جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ

الْعَلِيِّ

## 37 Al-‘Alīyyu

The Exalted

Al-‘Alīyyu! O believers, magnify  
By this great name, Allah, our Lord "Most High."

### سُورَةُ النِّحْلِ SURA "OF THE BEE"

He willed, and Heaven's blue arch vaulted the air;  
"Be!" said He – Earth!<sup>16</sup> and the round earth was  
made;  
See! at the hour of late and early prayer  
The very shadows worship Him, low laid.

Most High! the lengthening shadows teach  
Morning and evening prayer to each. ۞

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xvi. chapter "Of the Bee."

## 38 Al-Kabīr

The Very Great



Praise Him, Al-Kabīr, seated on "the Throne,"  
The "Very Great," the High-exalted One.

### THE SEVEN HEAVENS

Seven Heavens Allah made:  
First "Paradise," the Jennat-al-Firdaus;  
The next, Al Khuld, "Gate of Eternity;"  
The third, Dar-as-Salām, the "Peaceful House;"  
The fourth, Dar-al-Qarār, "Felicity;"  
The fifth was Aidenn, "Home of Golden Light;"  
The sixth, Al Na'īm, Garden of Delight;"  
The seventh, Al-'Illiyūn, "Footstool of the Throne;"  
And, each and every one,  
Sphere above sphere, and treasure over treasure,  
The great decree of God made for reward and pleasure.

Saith the Perspicuous Book:<sup>27</sup>

"Look up to Heaven! look!  
Dost thou see flaw or fault  
In that vast vault,

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxvii. chapter "Of the Kingdom."

Spangled with silvery lamps of night,  
Or gilded with glad light  
Of sunrise, or sunset, or warm noon?  
    Rounded He well the moon?  
Kindled He wisely the red Lord of Day?  
    Look twice! look thrice, and say!"

Thy weak gaze fails;  
Eyesight is drowned in yon abyss of blue;  
Ye see the glory, but ye see not through:  
    God's greatness veils  
Its greatness by its greatness – all that wonder  
Lieth the lowest of those Heavens under,  
    Beyond which Angles view  
Allah, and Allah's mighty works, asunder;  
The thronged clouds whisper of it when they thunder.

*Allah Kabīr! in silence we  
Meditate on Thy majesty.~\*~*

## 39 Al-Hafīz

The Preserver



Al-Hafīz! O "Preserver!" succour us  
Who, humbly trustful, cry unto Thee thus.

### سُورَةُ النُّجُومِ SURA "OF THE NIGHT STAR"

By the Sky and the Night star!  
By Al-Ṭāriq<sup>xxxviii</sup> the white star!  
    Shining clear –  
When darkness covers man and beast –  
    To proclaim dawn near,  
And the gold sun hastening from the east,  
We have set a guard upon you, every one;  
    Be ye not afraid!  
Of seed from loins, and milk from bosom-bone,  
    Ye were made:  
We are able to remake you, when ye die,  
    For cold death  
Cometh forth from Us, as warm life cometh  
    And gift of breath.

Do the darkness and the terror plot against you?  
We also plan;  
They that love you are stronger than your haters.  
Trust God, O man!<sup>28</sup>

"Ya Al-Hafiz!" on your doors ye grave;  
In your hearts, too, these scriptures have! ﴿٢٩﴾

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxvi. chapter "Of the Night Star."

## 40 Al-Muqīt

The Maintainer



Praise Al-Muqīt, the great "Maintainer!" He  
Made us, and makes our sustenance to be.

### ❧ SURA "OF THE INEVITABLE"

The chapter of "the Inevitable:"<sup>29</sup> We gave  
The life ye live; why doubt ye We can save  
What once hath been from wasting – if We will –  
When, like dry corn, man lieth in his grave?

Did ye cause seed to grow, or was it We, –  
Wherefrom spring all the many lives that be?  
Who stirred the pulse which couples man and maid,  
And in the fruit hid that which forms the tree?

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lvi.



Ye go afield to scatter grain, and then  
Sleep, while We change it into bread for men;  
Have ye bethought why seed should shoot, not sand,  
Granite, or gravel? Why the gentle rain

Falleth so clean and sweet from out Our sky,  
Which might be salt and black and bitter? Why  
The soft clouds gather it from off the seas  
To spread it o'er the pastures by and by?

The flame ye strike rubbing Afār and Markh,<sup>30</sup>  
Have ye considered that such strange yellow spark?  
Did ye conceive such marvel, or did We  
Grant it, to warm and cheer men in the dark?

Not now, but when the soul comes to the neck,<sup>xxxix</sup>  
The meaning of those mercies each shall reck.  
Then are We nearest, though ye see it not;  
Can ye that summoned spirit order back?

Nay, Al-Muqīt! in life and death  
Thine are we: Truth Thy Scripture saith. ﴿٢٠﴾

<sup>30</sup> The woods used by the ancient Arabs to kindle fire.

## 41 Al-Ḥasīb

The Reckoner



Laud Him as "Reckoner," casting up th'account,  
And making little merits largely mount.

### سُورَةُ النِّسَاءِ SURA "OF WOMEN"

Give more than thou takest:  
If one shall salute thee,  
Saying, "Peace be upon thee,"  
The salute which thou makest,  
Speak it friendlier still,  
As beseemeth goodwill;  
Saying, "Peace, too, and love  
From Allah above  
Be with thee:" – for heard  
Is each brotherly word;  
And it shall not be lost  
That thou gavest him most.<sup>31</sup>

Ya Ḥasīb! praise to Thee; for all  
Our good deeds needs must be so small. ❦

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



## 42 Al-Jamīl

The Benign

Al-Jamīl! "the Benign;" ah, name most dear,  
Which bids us love and worship without fear.

### THE ROSE GARDEN

Too much ye tremble, too much fear to feel  
That yearning love which Allah's laws reveal;  
Too oft forget – your troubled journey through –  
He who is Power, is Grace and Beauty too,  
And Clemency, and Pity, and Pure Rest,  
The Highest and the Uttermost and Best;  
Sweeter than honey, and more dear to see  
Than any loveliness on land or sea  
By bard or lover praised, or famed in story;  
For these were shadows of His perfect glory;  
Which is not told, because, who sees God near  
Loseth the speech to speak, in loving fear,  
So joyous is he, so astonished.  
Hath there come to ye what the Dervish said,

At Kaisereya, in the marble shrine,  
Who woke from vision of the love divine?  
"I have seen Allah!" quoth he – all a-glow  
With splendour of the dream which filled him so –  
"Yea! I have paced the Garden of Delight,  
And heard and known!"

"Impart to us thy light,"  
His fellows cried.

He paused, and smiled, and spake:  
"Fain would I say it, brothers, for your sake,  
for I have wandered in a sphere so bright,  
Have heard such things, and witnessed such a sight,  
That now I know whither all nature turns,  
And what the love celestial is which burns,  
At the great heart of all the world, ensuring  
That griefs shall pass and joy will be enduring.  
Yet ask me not! I am as one who came  
Where, among roses, one bush, all aflame  
By fragrant crimson blossoms, charged the air  
With loveliness and perfume past compare.  
Then had I thought to load my skirt with roses,  
That ye might judge what wealth that land discloses;  
And filled my robe, plucking the peerless blooms;  
But ah! the scent so rich, so heavenly, comes;  
So were my senses melted into bliss  
With the intoxicating breath of this;  
I let the border of my mantle fall –  
The roses slipped! I bring ye none at all."

Brothers! with other eyes must we  
Behold the roses on that Tree.<sup>21</sup> ❧



## 43 Al-Karīm

The Bountiful Lord

Allah-al-Karīm! Bountiful Lord! we bless  
By this good name Thy loving kindnesses.

### سُورَةُ الْكَافِرَاتِ SURA "OF CLEAVING ASUNDER"

O Man! what hath beguiled,  
That thou shouldst stray  
From the plain easy way  
Of Allah's service, being Allah's chid?  
When thou wert not,  
And when thou wast a clot,  
He did foresee thee, and did fashion thee  
From heel to nape,  
Giving thee this fair shape,  
Composing thee in wondrous symmetry –  
More than thy mother – in the form thou wearest;  
Nearer to thee than what on earth is nearest.  
Kinder than kin is He –  
Wilt thou forgetful be?<sup>32</sup>

Ya Karīm! since Thou lovest thus,  
Quicken, ah, quicken love in us. ❦

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxii. chapter "Of Cleaving Asunder."

## 44 Ar-Raqīb

The Watchful One



Allah-ar-Raqīb! praise ye "the Watchful One,"  
Who noteth what men do and leave undone.

### ❧ THE BOOKS OF GOOD AND EVIL

The book of the wicked is in Sijjīn,  
A close-writ book:  
A book to be unfolded on the Awful Day,  
A day whereto men would not look.

What Sijjīn is  
Who shall make thee know?  
The Black Gaol. Under Jehannum,  
Under Lazā, the "red glow,"  
Under Ḥuṭamah, "the fires which split;"  
Beneath Sa'īr, the "Yellow Hell,"  
And scorching Saqar, lieth it,  
And Jaḥīm, where devils dwell:  
Lower from light and bliss  
Than Hāwiyeh, "the abyss:"  
Sijjīn is this.

But the books of the righteous are in ‘Illiyūn,<sup>xi</sup>  
And what shall make thee see  
The glory of that region, nigh to God,  
Where those records be?  
Joy shall make their portion: they shall lie  
With the light of delight upon their faces,  
On soft seats reclining  
In peaceful places;  
Drinking wine, pure wine, sealed wine,  
Whose seal is musk and rose;  
Allayed by the crystal waves that shine  
In Tasnīm,<sup>xiii</sup> which flows  
From the golden throne of God: at its brink  
Angels drink.<sup>33</sup>

O “Watcher!” grant our names may be  
In that Book lying near to Thee. ❧

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Qur’an, lxxxiii. chapter “Of Short Weight.”

## 45 Al-Mujīb

The Hearer of Prayer



Allah-al-Mujīb, Who biddest men to pray,  
And hearest prayer; thus praise we Thee alway.

❧ ‘ALĪ AND THE JEW

Our Lord the Prophet (peace to him!) doth write –  
Sura the seventeenth, intituled “Night:” –  
“Pray at the noon, pray at the sinking sun,  
In night-time pray; but most when night is done,  
For daybreak’s prayer is surely borne on high  
By Angels changing guard within the sky.”  
And in another verse, “Dawn’s prayer is more  
Than the wide world with all its treasured store.”

Therefore the Faithful, when the growing light  
Gives to discern a black hair from a white,  
Haste to the mosque, and, bending Mecca-way,  
Recite Al-Fātiḥah<sup>xliii</sup> while ‘tis scarce yet day:  
Praise be to Allah, Lord of all that live.  
Merciful King and Judge, to Thee we give



Worship and honour! Succour us and guide  
Where those have walked who rest Thy Throne beside;  
The way of peace, and not the wrongful path,  
Nor theirs to whom, oh Lord! Thou hast shewn wrath.  
He who saith this, before the east is red,  
A hundred prayers of Azan hath he said.

Hear now this story of it – told, I ween,  
For your soul's comfort by Jalāl ad-Dīn  
In the great pages of the Mesnevi;  
For therein, plain and certain, shall ye see  
How precious is the prayer at break of day  
In Allah's ears, and in His sight alway  
How sweet are reverence and gentleness  
Done to His creatures: "‘Alī" (whom I bless!),  
The son of Abū Tālib – he, surnamed  
"Lion of God," in many battles famed,  
The cousin of our Lord the Prophet (grace  
Be his!), uprose betimes one morn, to pace,  
As he was wont, unto the mosque, wherein  
Our Lord (bliss live with him!) watched to begin  
Al-Fātiḥah. Darkling was the sky, and strait  
The lane between the city and mosque-gate,  
By rough stones broken and deep pools of rain;  
And therethrough toilfully, with steps of pain,  
Leaning upon his staff an old Jew went  
To synagogue, on pious errand bent;  
For those be "People of the Book," and some  
Are chosen of Allah's will who have not come  
Unto full light of knowledge; therefore, he,  
Alī, the Caliph of proud days to be –  
Knowing this good old man, and why he stirred

Thus early, ere the morning mills<sup>xlv</sup> were heard –  
 Out of his nobleness and grace of soul  
 Would not thrust past, though the Jew blocked the whole  
 Breadth of the lane, slow hobbling. So they went,  
 That ancient first; and, in soft discontent,  
 After him 'Alī, noting how the sun  
 Flared near, and fearing prayer might be begun;  
 Yet no command upraising, no harsh cry  
 To stand aside, because the dignity  
 Of silver hairs is much, and morning praise  
 Was precious to the Jew, too. Thus their ways  
 Wended the pair; great 'Alī, sad and slow,  
 Following the greybeard, while the east, a-glow,  
 Blazed with bright spears of gold athwart the blue,  
 And the Muezzin's call<sup>xlv</sup> came, "Allahu!  
 La ilah' illahu!"

In the mosque, our Lord  
 (On whom be peace) stood by the mimbar-board,  
 In act to bow and Fātiḥah forth to say.  
 But, while his lips moved, some strong hand did lay  
 Over his mouth a palm invisible,  
 So that no voice on the assembly fell.  
 Ya! Rabbi 'lalamīna thrice he tried  
 To read, and thrice the sound of reading died,  
 Stayed by this unseen touch. Thereat amazed,  
 Our Lord Muhammad ﷺ turned, arose, and gazed,  
 And saw – alone of all within the shrine –  
 A splendid Presence, with large eyes divine  
 Beaming, and golden pinions folded down,  
 Their speed still tokened by the fluttered gown;  
 Gabriel he knew, the Spirit who doth stand

Chief of the Sons of Heav'n, at God's right hand;  
 "Gabriel! why stay'st thou me?" the Prophet said,  
 "Since at this hour the *Fātiḥah* should be read."  
 But the bright Presence, smiling, pointed where  
 Alī towards the outer gate drew near,  
 Upon the threshold shaking off his shoes,  
 And giving "alms of entry," as men use.  
 "Yea!" spake th' Archangel, "sacred is the sound  
 Of morning praise, and worth the world's great round,  
 Though earth were pearl and silver; therefore I  
 Stayed thee, Muhammad, in the act to cry,  
 Lest 'Alī, tarrying in the lane, should miss,  
 For his good deed, its blessing and its bliss."  
 Thereat the Archangel vanished, and our Lord  
 Read *Fātiḥah* forth beneath the *mimbar*-board.

Us, too, Mujib! in hearing keep;  
 Better is prayer than food or sleep!~\*~

## 46 Al-Wāsi‘

The All-  
Comprehending One



*"All-comprehending One," Al-Wāsi‘! we  
By this name also praise and honour Thee.*

### ❧ TURNING TO MECCA

Turn, wheresoe'er ye be, to Mecca's stone,  
For this is holy, and your Lord doth hear;  
Thitherwards turn! – so hath all Islam one  
Heart to its thought and harbour of its prayer.

But Allah's house eastwards and westwards lies,  
Northwards and southwards. He is everywhere:  
Whithersoever way ye bend your eyes,  
Face to face are ye with Al-Wāsi‘ there.

It is not righteousness to kneel aright  
Fronting the Qibla; but to rightly hold  
Of God, and of His judgment, and the bright  
Bands of His Angels; and what truth is told

In the sure Qur'an by God's holy Prophet;  
To succour orphans, strangers, suppliants, kin;  
Your gold and worldly treasure – to give of it  
Ransom for captives, alms which mercy win:

To keep your covenants when ye covenant;  
Your woes and sufferings patiently bear,  
Being the will of God: – this is to front  
Straight for the Qibla: this is faith and fear.<sup>34</sup>

Abounding Lord! in every place  
Is built the Mecca of Thy grace. ~~~

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."

47 Al-Hākim  
al-Mutlaq

The Judge of Judges



Al-Hākim! Judge of all the judges! show  
Mercy to us and make us justice know.

❧ THE ANGELS OF THE SCALES

Only one Judge is just, for only One  
Knoweth the hearts of men; and hearts alone  
Are guilty or are guiltless. That which lied  
Was not the tongue – he is a red dog tied.

And that which slew was not the hand ye saw  
Grasping the knife – she is a slave whose law  
The master gives, seated within the tent;  
The hand was handle to the instrument;

The dark heart murdered. O believers! leave  
Judgment to Heav'n – except ye do receive  
Office and order to accomplish this;  
Then honourable, and terrible, it is.

The Prophet ﷺ said:<sup>35</sup> "At the great day of doom  
Such fear on the most upright judge shall come  
That he shall moan, 'Ah! would to God that I  
Had stood for trial, and not sate to try!'"

He said: "The Angels of the Scales will bring  
Just and unjust who judged before Heav'n's King,  
Grasping them by the neck; and, if it be,  
One hath adjudged his fellows wickedly,

"He shall be hurled to hell so vast a height  
'Tis forty years' fierce journey ere he light;  
But if one righteously hath borne the rod,  
The Angels kiss those lips which spake for God."

Lord! make us just, that we may be  
A little justified with Thee. ~

<sup>35</sup> Cf. "The Mishkāt-al-Maṣābiḥ." <sup>nzhi</sup>

## 48 Al-Wadūd

The Loving



"The Loving" – Al-Wadūd! ah, title dear,  
Whereby Thy children, praise Thee, free of fear.

### ❧ TASNĪM AND SALSABĪL

Sweet seem your wedded days; and dear and tender  
Your children's talk; brave 'tis to hear the tramp  
Of pastured horses; and to see the splendour  
Of gold and silver plunder; and to camp

With goats and camels by the bubbling fountain;  
And to drink fragrance from the desert wind,  
And to sit silent on a mighty mountain;  
And all the joys which make life bright and kind.

But ye have heard of streams more brightly flowing  
Than those whereby ye wander; of a life  
Glorious and glad and pure beyond earth's knowing;  
Love without loss, and wealth without strife.



Lo! we have told you of the golden Garden  
Kept for the Faithful, where the soil is still  
Wheat-flour and musk and camphire, and fruits harden  
To what delicious savour each man will

Upon the Tooba tree; which bends its cluster  
To him that doth desire, bearing all meat;  
And of the sparkling fountains which out-lustre  
Diamonds and emeralds, running clear and sweet,

Tasnīm and Salsabīl, whose lucent waters  
Are rich, delicious, undistracting wine;  
And of the Houris, pleasure's perfect daughters,  
Virgins of Paradise, whose black eyes shine

Soul-deep with love and langour, having tresses  
Night-dark, with scents of the gold-blooming date  
And scarlet roses; lavishing caresses  
That satisfy, but never satiate;

Whose looks refrain from any save their lover,  
Whose peerless limbs and bosoms' ivory swell  
Are like the ostrich egg which feathers cover  
From stain or dust, so white and rounded well:

Dwelling in marvellous pavilions, builded  
Of hollow pearls, wherethrough a great light shines –  
Cooled by soft breezes and by glad suns gilded –  
On the green pillows where the Blest reclines.

A rich reward it shall be, a full payment  
For life's brief trials and sad virtue's stress,  
When friends with friends, clad all in festal raiment,  
Share in deep Heaven the Angels' happiness;  
Nay, and full payment, though ye give those pleasures  
Which make life dear, to fight and die for faith,  
Rendering to God your wives and flocks and treasures,  
That He may pay you tenfold after death.

For, if the bliss of Paradise, transcending  
Delights of earth, should win ye to be bold,  
Yet know, this glory hath its crown and ending  
In Allah's grace, which is the Joy untold,

The Utmost Bliss. Beyond the Happy River  
The justified shall see God's face in Heaven,  
Live in His sweet goodwill,<sup>36</sup> and taste for ever  
Al-Wadūd's<sup>37</sup> love, unto His children given.

Yea! for high Heaven's felicity  
Is but the shadow, Lord, of Thee. ❧

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ix. chapter "Of Repentance."

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxv. chapter "Of Zodiacal Signs."

## 49 Al-Majīd

The All-Glorious



Al-Majīd! Glorious Lord upon the Throne.<sup>38</sup>  
With this great name we praise Thee, Sovereign One!

### سُورَةُ الْاَنْعَامِ SURA "OF THE COW"

By the Heavens, walled with silver signs and towers!  
By the Promised Day!  
By the Witness and the Witnessed; and the Way  
Of righteousness! – this glorious Book of ours  
Lieth treasured up in Heaven,  
As 'twas given  
On the mighty "Night of Powers;"<sup>xlvii</sup>  
And its easy bond is this,  
The which to keep is bliss:  
"None save Glorious Allah we serve;  
Never from His precepts swerve;  
Honour teacher, father, mother;  
Unto him who is thy brother,  
Unto kindred, friends also,

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxv. chapter "Of Celestial Signs."

Orphans, suppliants, sad ones, show  
Gentleness and help; to each  
Speak with kind and courteous speech.  
Give in alms that thou may'st spare,  
And be constant in thy prayer."<sup>39</sup>

Allah al-Majīd! Thy favour grant,  
That we may keep this covenant. ❧

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."



## 50 Al-Bā'ith

The Raiser from Death

Al-Bā'ith! Opener of Tombs! we praise  
Thy power, which unto life the dead can raise.

### ❧ IBLIS AND ABRAHAM

Iblis spake to Abraham:  
"What is this thy Lord hath told thee?  
Shall the Resurrection be  
When the mouldering clods enfold thee?  
Nay! and if a man might rise,  
Buried whole, in heedful wise,  
See yon carcase, tempest-beaten –  
Part the wandering fox hath eaten,  
Part by the fishes hath been torn,  
Part the sea-fowl hence have borne;  
Never back those fragments can  
Come to him who was a man."

Abraham spake unto his Lord:<sup>40</sup>  
"Show me how is wrought this wonder;  
Can Thy resurrection be  
When a man's dust lies asunder?"

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

“Art thou therefore not believing,”  
Allah said, “because deceiving  
Iblīs fills with lies thy heart?”  
“Nay,” he answered, “but impart  
Knowledge, Mightiest One and Best!  
that my heart may be at rest.”

God said: “Take, thou doubting one!  
Four birds from among My creatures;  
Sever each bird’s head, and so  
Mingle feathers, forms, and features,  
That the fragments shall not be  
Knowable to such as ye.  
Into four divide the mass,  
Then upon the mountains pass,  
On four peaks a portion lay,  
And, returning homeward, say,  
‘By the name and power of God –  
Who hath made men of the clod,  
And hath said the dead shall rise –  
Birds! fly hither in such wise  
As ye lived.’ And they shall come,  
Perfect, whole, and living, home.”

Thereupon Al-Khalīl took  
A raven, eagle, dove, and cock;  
From their bodies shore the heads,  
Cut the four fowl into shreds,  
Mingled all their mass together,  
Blood and bone, and flesh and feather;  
Then, dividing this four-wise,

Laid it where the four peaks did rise  
Two to south and two to north.  
Then the dove's head held he forth,  
Crying, "Come!" Lo! at the word  
Cooed at his feet the slaughtered bird.  
"Come, raven!" spake he: as he spoke,  
On glossy wing, with eager croak,  
Flew round the raven. Then he said,  
Return! thou cock:" the cock obeyed.  
Lastly the eagle summoned he,  
Which circling came, on pinions free,  
Restored and soaring to the sky,  
With perfect plumes and undimmed eye.

So in the Holy Book 'tis writ  
How Abraham's heart at rest was set.

*Why should we fear to yield our breath,  
To Thee That art the Lord of Death?* ~~~

## 51 Ash-Shahīd

The Witness



Ash-Shahīd! God is "Witness!" and He took  
Witness of us, ye People of the Book!

### POETS AND PROPHETS

THE spirits of the Prophets came at morn  
To Sinai, summoned by their Lord's command,  
Singers and seers; – those born and those unborn,  
The chosen souls of men, a solemn band.

The noble army ranged, in viewless might,  
Around that mountain peak which pierces heaven;  
Greater and lesser teachers, sons of light;  
Their number was ten thousand score and seven.

Then Allah took covenant with His own,  
Saying, "My wisdom and My word receive;  
Speak of Me unto men, known or unknown,  
Heard or unheard; bid such as will, believe."



“And there shall come apostles, guiding ye,  
Jesus, Muhammad: follow them and aid!  
Are you resolved, and will you war for Me?”  
“We are resolved, O Lord of all!” they said.

“Bear witness then!” spake Allah, “souls most dear,  
I am your Lord and ye heralds of Mine.”  
Thenceforward through all lands His Prophet bear  
The message of the mystery divine.”

Allah-ash-Shahīd! make us to hear  
The errand that Thy children bear. ❧

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

## 52 Al-Haqq

The Truth



*O Thou, the Truth! when so Thy name we call,  
All's said that need be said, sith Thou art all.*

### ❧ THE SIN OF SINS

Truth and all truth He is! serve Him alone  
Who hath none other by or near His Throne;  
Unto all sins is Allah's pardon given  
Except what giveth Him partners in Heaven,<sup>42</sup>  
Being Apart, Exalted, Truth and Light,  
Only and wholly – hold thou this aright!

Ya Haqq! true God! never with Thee  
Can other or can equal be. ❧

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



## 53 Al-Wakīl

The Guardian

'Ala kuli shayin Wakīl!<sup>43</sup> Guardian of all!  
By this name trustfully on Thee we call.

### سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةِ SURA "OF THE COW"

Verily God is guard!  
What other hath created you, and made  
Men gone before, and earth's foundations laid  
So broad and hard,  
To be your dwelling-place;  
And Heaven's star-jewelled face  
Arched for you roof-top; and the tender rain  
Sent down at the due season, whereby grain  
Groweth, and clustered gold  
Of dates, and grapes that hold  
The purple and the amber honey-juice?  
These for you use

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Your Lord and "Agent" gave.  
Make Him no peers, nor other guardian have.

Allah-al-Wakīl! Thy wards are we;  
Have us in Thy fidelity. ❧

## 54 Al-Qawīyyu

The Almighty



Thou Mighty One! Whose mercy hath upraised  
Mankind to praise Thee, be Thou hereby praised!

### THE FLY AND THE FALSE GODS

Consider them that serve  
The false gods, how they lay in golden dishes  
Honey and fruits and fishes  
Before their idols; and the green fly comes,  
Shoots through the guarded gates, and hums  
Scorn of their offering, stealing what she will;  
And none of these great gods the thief can kill,  
    So swift she is and small:  
    And none at all  
Can make one little fly, for all their state;  
So feeble are they, and so falsely great.<sup>44</sup>  
Ye people of the stocks and stones! herein  
A parable is set against your sin.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxii, chapter "Of Believers."

But Allah high doth rule  
Whose hand made all things, being "Powerful."

*Al-Qawīyyu! King of power and might!*  
*By Thy hand o'er us day and night! ﴿٢٨﴾*

# المُتَيْنِ وَجَدَكَ

## 55 Al-Matīn

### The Firm

Allah-al-Matīn! "Firm" is our Lord and fast;  
Praise Him Who doth uphold Thee to the last.

#### THE TENT-POLE

By the Angels ranged in ranks,  
And the Rain-cloud Drivers,  
And the reciters of the word, "Thy God is one,"  
Firm is our Lord!  
Of the heavens the tent-pole,  
Al-Watad; and the earth  
Ḥabl-al-Matīn, the sure Cord:<sup>45</sup>  
By this thy soul  
Holdeth, from birth:  
Fast is the cord, and sure;  
They only shall endure  
Who dwell beneath the mighty tent upholden  
By Al-Watad,<sup>46</sup> the Golden.

Stay of Thy servants, Al-Matīn!  
In Thee is strong deliverance seen.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii, chapter "Of the Family of Imran."

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxviii. chapter "Of the Information."

## 56 Al-Walī

The Nearest Friend



Al-Walī! Nearest of all friends, and Best,  
So praise your Lord, Whose help is mightiest

### ABRAHAM'S BREAD

Close is He always to His faithful ones,  
But closer dwelt they in the times of old.  
Hath it come to ye what Al-Baydāwī  
Presenteth of the days of Abraham,  
Whom Allah called His "friend," and like a friend  
Softly entreated,<sup>47</sup> stooping out of Heaven  
To help and comfort him so dear to God?  
Oftimes the Angels of his Lord would light  
Familiarly, with folded wings, before  
The curtain of his tent, conversing there;  
Oftimes, on thorny flats of wilderness,  
Or in the parched pass, or the echoing cave,  
The very voice of God would thrill his ears;  
And he might answer, as a man with man,  
Hearing and speaking things unspeakable.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women."



Wherefore, no marvel that he gave his son  
At Allah's bidding, and had back his son –  
Patient and safe – when the wild goat came down  
And hung amid the nebbuk by his horns,  
On Thabir, nigh to Mecca, in the vale  
Of Mina;<sup>48</sup> and the knife of Abraham  
Reddened with unwept blood.

There had fall'n drought  
Upon the land, and all the mouths he fed  
Hungered for meal; therefore Al-Khalil sent  
Messengers unto Egypt – to a lord  
Wealthy and favourable, having store  
Of grain and cattle by the banks of Nile.  
"Give unto Abraham," the message said,  
"A little part for gold, yet more for love –  
(As he had given, if the strait were thine)  
Meal of the millet, lentil, wheat, and bean,  
That he and his may live; for drought hath come  
Upon our fields and pastures, and we pine."  
Spake the Egyptian lord, "Lo! now ye ask  
O'ermuch of me for friendliness, and more  
Than gold can buy, since dearth hath also come  
Over our fields, and nothing is to spare.  
Yet had it been to succour Abraham,  
And them that dwell beneath his tent, the half  
Of all we hold had filled your empty sacks.  
But he will feed people we wot not of,  
Poor folk, and hungry wanderers of the waste:  
The which are nought to us, who have of such,  
If there were surplusage. Therefore return;  
Find food elsewhere!"

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxxvii. chapter "Of the Ranged."

Then said the messengers  
One to another, "If we shall return  
With empty sacks, our master's name, so great  
For worship in the world, will suffer shame,  
And men will say he asked and was denied."  
Therefore they filled their sacks with white sea-sand  
Gathered by Gaza's wave, and sorrowfully  
Journeyed to Kedar, where lay Abraham,  
To whom full privately they told this thing,  
Saying, "We filled the sacks with snow-white sand,  
Lest thy great name be lessened 'mongst the folk,  
Seeing us empty-handed; for the man  
denied thee corn; since thou wouldst give, quoth he,  
To poor folk and to wanderers of the waste,  
And there are hungry mouths enough by Nile."

Then was the heart of Abraham sore, because  
The people of his tribe drew round to share  
The good food brought, and all the desert trooped  
With large-eyed mothers and their pining babes,  
Certain of succour if the sheikh could help.  
So did the spirit of Al-Khalil sink  
That into a swoon he fell, and lay as one  
Who hath not life. But Sarah, his wife –  
That knew not – bade her maidens bring a sack,  
Open its mouth, and knead some meal for cakes.  
And when the sack was opened, there showed flour,  
Fine, three times bolted, whiter than sea-sand;  
Which in the trough they kneaded, rolling cakes,  
And baking them over the crackling thorns;

So that the savour spread throughout the camp  
Of new bread smoking, and the people drew  
Closer and thicker, as ye see the herds  
Throng – horn, and wool, and hoof – at watering-time,  
When after fiery leagues, the wells are reached.

But Abraham, awakening, smelled the bread:  
“Whence,” spake he unto Sarai, “hast thou meal,  
Wife of my bosom? for the smell of bread  
Riseth, and lo! I see the cakes are baked.”  
“By God! Who is only One,” she said,  
“Whence should it come save from thy friend who sent,  
The lord of Egypt?” “Nay!” quoth Abraham,  
And fell upon his face, low-worshipping,  
“But this hath come from the dear mighty hands  
Of Allah – of the Lord of Egypt’s lords –  
My ‘Friend,’ and King, and Helper: now my folk  
Shall live and die not. Glory be to God!”

He that hath Allah for a friend,  
To want and woe hath put the end. ❧

## 57 Al-Ḥamīd

The All-Praiseworthy



Rich to reward your Lord is; oh, do ye  
Praise Al-Ḥamīd, the "Ever-praiseworthy!"

### ❧ THE GARDEN AND THE ROCK

Praise Him by alms; and when ye help believers,  
Mar not your gifts with grudging word or will;  
Since ye at Allah's hands are free receivers,  
Freely bestow. A garden on a hill

Is a likeness of that fair compassion  
Shown for the sake of God: the heavy rain  
Descendeth, and the dew; and every fashion  
Of good seed springs tenfold in fruit and grain.

The likeness of the evil heart, bestowing  
That men may praise, is as the thin-clad peak,  
Wherefrom the rain washes all the soil for growing,  
Leaving the hard rock naked, fruitless, bleak.

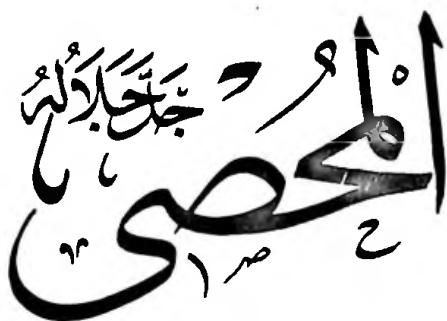
Say, will ye plant on rock or plenteous garden?  
Grow nought, or grow green vines that shade afford? –  
Forgive your brethren as ye ask for pardon;  
Give as ye have received, and praise your Lord!<sup>49</sup>

Allah-al-Ḥamīd! what tongue can tell  
Thy goodness, ever-laudable? ~\*~

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

## 58 Al-Muḥṣī

The Accountant



Al-Muḥṣī! The "Accountant!" laud Him so  
Who reckoneth up the deeds men do below.

### ❧ SURA "OF THE EARTHQUAKE"

In God's Name, Merciful, Compassionate!  
When Earth shall quake with quaking,<sup>50</sup>  
And cast her burden forth  
Of corpses; and live men  
Shall ask – with terror shaking –  
"What aileth Earth?" that day  
She shall reply, and say  
    That which her Lord commands:  
    And men shall come in bands,  
This side and that side, ranged to show  
Their works, and the account to know.  
And he that wrought of good a red ant's weight  
    Shall see it writ:  
And who did evil, aye! as the skin of a date,  
    Shall witness it.

Al-Muḥṣī! dread Accountant! look  
In mercy on our judgement-book. ❧

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xcix. chapter "Of the Earthquake."

## 59 Al-Mubdī'

### The Beginner



Al-Mubdī'! praise Him by this holy name,  
Who gave to all the spark which lights life's flame.

#### THE LIGHT OF LIFE

Whence came ye; and the people of the groves;  
The streams, the seas, the wilderness, the air;  
Beasts, fishes, fowl; each with their lives and loves,  
Each glad to be, each in its kind so fair?

"Begotten of their like?" Yea! but "their like,"  
Who did devise that, and the hidden charm  
Whereby – as flame from torch to torch doth strike –  
The light of life shines on, bright, joyous, warm?

Al-Mubdī' hath devised it! His decree  
In the beginning shaped and ordered each,  
Saying to all these things foreseen, "So be!"  
And so they were, obeying Allah's speech.

Al-Mubdī'! "Great Beginner!" take  
Our praises, for life's pleasant sake! ❧







## 60 Al-Mu'id

The Restorer

He made life – and He takes it – but instead  
Gives more; praise the Restorer, Al-Mu'id!

### ❧ A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAD

He who died at Azan sends  
This to comfort faithful friends:

Faithful friends! it lies, I know,  
Pale and white and cold as snow;  
And ye say, "Abdullah's dead!"  
Weeping at my feet and head;  
I can see your falling tears,  
I can hear your cries and prayers;  
Yet I smile, and whisper this –  
"I am not that thing you kiss;  
Cease your tears, and let it lie;  
It was mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! what the women lave,  
For its last bed in the grave,  
Is a tent which I am quitting,

Is a garment no more fitting,  
Is a cage from which, as last,  
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.  
Love the inmate, not the room;  
The wearer, not the garb; the plume  
Of the falcon, not the bars  
Which kept him from the splendid stars.

Loving friends! be wise, and dry  
Straightway every weeping eye;  
What ye lift upon the bier  
Is not worth a wistful tear.  
'Tis an empty sea-shell, one  
Out of which the pearl is gone;  
The shell is broken, it lies there;  
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.  
'Tis an earthen jar whose lid  
Allah sealed, the while it hid  
That treasure of His treasury,  
A mind which loved Him; let it lie!  
Let the shard be earth's once more,  
Since the gold shines in His store!

Allah Mu'īd, Allah most good!  
Now Thy grace is understood;  
Now my heart no longer wonders  
What Al-Barzakh<sup>51</sup> <sup>xlvi</sup> is, which sunders  
Life from death, and death from Heaven;  
Nor the "Paradises Seven"  
Which the happy dead inherit;  
Nor those "birds"<sup>xl</sup> which bear each spirit  
Towards the Throne, "green birds and white,"  
Radiant, glorious, swift their flight!

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxii. chapter "Of Believers."

Now the long, long darkness ends,  
Yet ye wail, my foolish friends,  
While the man whom ye call "dead"  
In unbroken bliss instead  
Lives, and loves you; lost, 'tis true  
By any light which shines for you;  
But in light ye cannot see  
Of unfulfilled felicity,  
And enlarging Paradise,  
Lives the life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;  
Where I am, ye too shall dwell.  
I am gone before your face  
A heart-beat's time, a grey ant's pace.  
When ye come where I have stepped,  
Ye will marvel why ye wept;  
Ye will know, by true love taught,  
That here is all, and there is naught.  
Weep awhile, if ye are fain.  
Sunshine still must follow rain!  
Only not at death, for death –  
Now I see – is that first breath  
Which our souls draw when we enter  
Life, that is of all life centre.

Know ye Allah's law is love,  
Viewed from Allah's Throne above:  
Be ye firm of trust, and come  
Faithful onward to your home!  
"Lā ilāha illā Allāh!" Yea,  
Mu'id! Restorer! Sovereign!" say!

*He who died at Azan gave  
This to those who made his grave. ❧*

## 61 Al-Muḥyī

The Quickener



Al-Muḥyī! the "Quickener!" hereby  
Praise Him Whom Angels praise eternally.

### ❧ SURA "OF THE SIGNS"

"And of His signs is this,"<sup>52</sup> saith the Great Book;  
"Under the angry sun the slain earth – look! –  
Dries up to dust; dies every growing thing;  
Then blow we breaths of southern wind which bring  
Rain-dropping clouds, and see! the dead earth lives,  
And stirs, and swells; and every herb revives.  
So shall the dead be quickened by His breath,  
This is Al-Muḥyī's sign," the Great Book saith.

O thou believer! shall it be  
He saves the green thing, and not thee? ❧

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xli. chapter "Of Signs Explained."



## 62 Al-Mumīt

The Slayer



He quickeneth, but "He killeth:" blessed they  
Who may abide in trust that final day!

### THE ANGEL OF DEATH

Yea! some have found right good to hear the  
summons of their Lord,  
And gone as glad as warriors proud, who take up spear  
and sword  
At sounding of the song of fight; as light of heart as  
those  
For whom the bride unveileth her mouth of pearl and  
rose.

Jalāl ad-Dīn, ar-Rūmī, the saint of Balkh, the  
son  
Of him surnamed "Flower of the Faith," this was a  
chosen one,  
To whom Death softly showed himself, Heaven's gentle

call to give;  
For what word is it bids us die, save that which made  
us live?

Sick lay he there in Konya; 'twas dawn; the golden  
stream  
Of light, new springing in the east, on his thin lips  
did gleam –  
Those lips which spake the praise of God all through  
his holy years,  
And murmured now, with faith and hope unchanged,  
the morning prayers.

Then one who watched beside his bed, heard at the  
inner gate  
A voice cry, "İftah! 'open!' from far I come, and  
wait  
To speak my message to Jalāl – a message that will  
bring  
Peace and reward to him who lies the *Fātiḥah*  
murmuring."

Thereat the watcher drew the bar which closed the  
chamber-door,  
Wondering and 'feared, for ne'er was heard upon this  
earth before  
Accents so sweet and comforting, nor ever eyes of men  
Saw presence so majestic as his who entered then.

Entered with gliding footsteps a bright celestial youth,  
Splendid and strange in beauty, past words to speak

its truth;  
Midnight is not so dark and deep as was his solemn  
gaze,  
By love and pity lighted, as the night with silvery rays.

"What is thy name?" the watcher asked, "that I may tell  
my lord,  
Thou fair and dreadful messenger! whose glance is as  
a sword;  
Whose face is like the Heaven unveiled; whose tender  
searching voice  
Maketh the heart cease beating, but bids the soul  
rejoice."

"Azrael 'anā," spake the shape, "I am the Spirit of  
Death;  
And I am sent from Allah's throne to stay thy master's  
breath.  
"Come in! come in! thou Bird of God," cried joyously  
Jalāl,  
"Fold down thy heavenly plumes and speak! – Islam!  
what shall be, shall."

"Thou blessed one!" the Angel said, "I bring thy  
time of peace;  
When I have touched thee on the eyes, life's latest  
ache will cease;  
God bade me come as I am seen amid the heavenly  
host,  
No enemy of awful mould, but he who loveth most."



“Dear Angel! do what thou art bid,” quoth Jelal,  
    smilingly,  
“God willing, thou shalt find to-day a patient one  
    in me;  
Sweet is the cup of bitterness which cometh in such  
    wise!”  
With that he bowed his saintly brow, – and Azrael  
    kissed his eyes.

Al-Mumīt! “Slayer!” send him thus,  
In love, not anger, unto us. ❧

## 63 Al-Hayy

The Ever-Living



Praise Him, Al-Hayy! the "Ever-living" King,  
Who to eternal life His own doth bring.



### THE LIFE BEYOND

Saith the Book: "Count not as dead<sup>53</sup>  
Such as for the Faith have bled;  
Stark and red their bodies lie,  
But their souls are in the sky,  
Resident with God, who grants  
All for which the spirit pants.  
Joyful are they, resting there  
Free from sorrow, pain or fear;  
Watching us who, left in life,  
Are not quit, as yet, of strife;  
But shall soon attain, to share  
Allah's mercies, and declare –  
Side by side with those – that He

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

Showeth grace eternally,  
And withholdeth not the pay  
At the ending of the day.

Ya-Hayy! Thou ever-living Lord,  
Be ours such work and such reward. ❧

## 64 Al-Qayyūm

The Self-Subsisting



Magnify Him, Al-Qayyūm; and so call  
The "Self-subsisting" God Who judgeth all.

### ❧ THE TRUMPET

When the trumpet shall sound,  
On that day,<sup>54</sup>  
The wicked, slow-gathering,  
Shall say,  
"Is it long we have lain in our graves?  
For it seems as an hour!"  
Then will Isrāfil call them to judgement;  
And none shall have power  
To turn aside, this way or that;  
And their voices will sink  
To silence, except for the sounding  
Of a noise, like the noise on the brink

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xx. chapter "Of Ṭā-Hā"

Of the sea, when its stones  
    Are dragged with a clatter and hiss  
Down the shore, in a wild breakers' roar:  
    The sound of their woe shall be this!

Then they who denied  
    That He liveth Eternal, "Self-made,"  
Shall call to the mountains to crush them;  
    Amazed and affrayed.

*Thou Self-subsistent, Living Lord!*  
*Thy grace against that day afford.* ❧

## 65 Al-Wājid

The All-Perceiving



Al-Wājid! praise hereby that Watchful One  
Whose eyes see all things underneath the sun.

### سُورَةُ الْاٰنْ شُورَا "OF DAYBREAK"

By the Ten holy eyes<sup>55</sup> and the Dawns of gold!  
By the One and the Manifold!  
By the deepening of the Darkness of the night!  
(And these be oaths of might:)  
Hast thou considered what with 'Ād God wrought,  
And whereunto He brought  
Proud Iram<sup>56</sup> of the pillared throne,  
Whose like no other land did own;  
And Thamūd's<sup>57</sup> race, which hewed houses of rocks;  
And Pharaoh, strong for shocks  
As is a tent with tent-pegs driven deep?<sup>58</sup>  
Lo! these their haughty state did keep,  
and multiply their wickedness;  
Till Allah, who long-suffering hath,  
Laid upon them scourges of His wrath.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lxxxix. chapter "Of Daybreak."

<sup>56</sup> The Arabic word Wāṭad bears this significance.

Verily, as a "watch-tower" is your Lord.  
Lo! if ye knew this, would ye shut your hoard  
When the poor cry; devour the weak; and love  
Your riches more than treasures stored above?  
Ho! when the earth's bones crack,  
And, rank on rank, the angels gather,  
And hell's black gates fly back,  
How will each say, "Would God in life's fair weather,  
I had bethought me of this storm of hell!"

But then it shall be well  
For thee, thou soul! to-day uncomforted,  
Who know'st that Allah sees;  
And patiently awaitest till He please  
Call thee to comfort, praising Him and praised.  
Joyous thou shalt be raised  
To Paradise, hearing His angels say,  
"Enter, and be exceeding glad to-day!"

Al-Wājid! "Watcher!" save by grace,  
Who shall attain that happy place? ﴿٢٠﴾

## 66 Al-Wāḥid

The One



Wāḥid! The "One!" ye faithful, say herein  
Sura Al-Ikhlāṣ,<sup>57</sup> cleansing souls from sin.

❧ AL-IKHLĀṢ

In God's Name, Merciful, Compassionate!  
Say: "He is God alone,  
Eternal on the Throne.  
Of none begotten, and begetting none,  
Who hath not like unto Him any one!"<sup>58</sup>

Ya Wāḥid! Holy! Only! we  
Thus do declare Thy unity. ❧

<sup>57</sup> This name is given to the Sura as "clearing oneself" from heresy.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Qur'an, cxii, chapter "Of Unity."





## 67 Aṣ-Ṣamad

The Eternal

Aṣ-Ṣamad! the "Eternal!" by this name  
Laud Him Who will be, was, and is the Same.

### ❧ OZAIR THE JEW

Of Heaven's prodigious years man wotteth nought;  
The "Everlasting!" – hast thou strained thy thought  
Searching that depth, which numbs the seeking mind  
As too much light the eager gaze doth blind?  
The years of men are measured by the sun,  
And were not, until he his course begun;  
And will not be, when his gold dial dies:  
But God lived while no sun shone in the skies;  
And shall be living when all worlds are dead:  
Yet hereof, though ye see the truth is said,  
Ye take no more the meaning than one takes  
Measure of ocean by the cup that slakes  
His thirst, from rillet running to the sea.

Behind – before ye, shines Eternity,  
Visible as the vault's fathomless blue,  
Which is so deep the glance goes never through,

Though nothing stays save depth: so is it seen  
That Allah must be ever, and hath been;  
Seen, but not comprehended – for man's wit  
Knows this, yet knows – not understanding it.

Mete ye not Allah's times by man's: life gives  
No measure of the Life Divine which lives  
Unending, uncommenced, having no stay  
Of yesterday, to-morrow, or to-day;  
Being forever one unbroken Now  
Where past and future come not.

Heard'st thou how,  
What time fair Zion was given to sword and flame,  
Ozair<sup>59</sup> the Jew upon his camel came  
Over the hills which ring the sea of Lot,<sup>60</sup>  
So that one footstep and – ye see her not,  
And then another – and the city comes  
Full upon view with all her milk-white domes.  
But the Chaldean now had spoiled the place,  
And desolate and waste was Zion's face,  
Her proud abodes unpeopled, and her ways  
Heaped with charred beams and lintels. Ozair says,  
"O Lord! who promised to Jerusalem  
Comfort and peace; and for her sons, to them  
A glad return, how shall Thy word be kept  
When fire and steel over these roofs have swept,  
And she, that was a queen, lies dead and black,  
A smoking ruin, where the jackals pack?  
A hundred years were not enough to give  
Life back to Zion! Can she ever live?"

<sup>59</sup> Identified by some commentators with Ezra of Scripture.

<sup>60</sup> The Dead Sea.

But while he spake, the Angel of the Lord  
Laid on his doubting front a fiery sword,  
And Ozair in that lonely desert spot  
Fell prone, and lay – breathing and moving not –  
One hundred years, while the great world rolled on,  
And Zion rose, and mighty deeds were done.  
And when the hundred years were flown, God said,  
“Awake, Ozair! how long hast tarried,  
Thinkest thou, here?” Ozair replied, “A day,  
Perchance, or half.” The awful Voice said, “Nay!  
But look upon thy camel.” Of that beast  
Nought save white bones was left: no sign, the least,  
Of flesh, or hair, or hide: the desert grass  
Was matted o’er its shanks, and roots did pass  
From a gnarled fig-tree through the eye-pits twain,  
And in and out its ribs grew the vervain.  
But ‘mid the moulderings of its saddle-bags  
And crimson carpet, withered into rags,  
A basket, full of new-picked dates, stood there  
Beside a cruise of water, standing where  
He set them fresh, twice fifty years ago;  
And all the dates were golden with the glow  
Of yestreen’s sunset, and the cruise’s rim  
Sparkled with water to the very brim.  
“Ozair!” the awful Voice spake, “look on these!  
He maketh and unmaketh what shall please;  
Saves or destroys, restores or casts away;  
And centuries to Him are as a day;  
And cities all as easy to revive  
As this thy camel here, which now shall live.”

Thereon the skull and bones together crept  
From tangled weed and sand where they had slept;  
The hide and hair came, and the flesh filled in,  
The eyes returned their hollow pits within,  
The saddle-bags upon its haunches hung,  
The carpet on the saddle-horns was flung,  
The nose-rope from the muzzle fell. The beast  
Rose from its knees, and would have made to feast  
On the green herbage where its bones had lain,  
But that it heard bells of a caravan  
Coming from Kedron, and with glad cry roared.  
Then Ozair looked, and saw – newly restored –  
Zion's fair walls and temples, and a crowd  
Of citizens; and traffic rich and loud  
In her white streets; and knew time should not be  
Reckoned 'gainst Him who hath eternity.

*Aş-Şamad! Everlasting One!*

*Thy times are good: Thy will be done. ❧*



## 68 Al-Qādir

Providence

Al-Qādir! He is "Providence!" hereby  
The Lord of all things living magnify.

### ❧ KISMAT

When ye say Kismat, say it wittingly,  
O true believers! under Allah's throne  
Place is not left for those accursed three,  
"Destiny," "Fortune," "Chance." Allah alone

Ruleth His children: Kismat ye shall deem  
Each man's "allotted portion," from of old  
Fixed for his part in the Eternal scheme  
By those great Hands which all the worlds enfold.

Sayeth "the Book:" "There passeth no man's soul  
Except by God's permission, and the Speech  
Writ in the scroll determining the whole,  
The times of all men, and the times for each."<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. chapter "Of Imran's Family."

Also it sayeth: "If a man shall choose  
This world's reward, to him it shall be given;  
And if a man shall dare his life to lose  
For Paradise, he shall be paid in Heaven."<sup>62</sup>

Ya Qādir! "Ruler!" *teach us still,*  
Islam, submission to Thy will. ❧

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Cow."



## 69 Al-Muqtadir

The All-Powerful

Al-Muqtadir! the "Powerful!" by this  
Praise we the Word, whence cometh woe and bliss.

### سُورَةُ الْقَمَرِ SURA "OF THE MOON"

Verily, all things – saith "the Book"<sup>63</sup> – We made,  
Decreeing; and Our bidding was one word,  
Quick, as the twinkling of an eye; and all,  
Whatever things men do, stands in the scrolls,  
Where great and small alike are written down;  
And then shall surely come the Hour – the Hour!  
And bitter for the sinners it will be  
When they are dragged, upon their faces, down  
To hell, and taste the touch of fire; but sweet  
Will it be for the pious – these shall sit  
'Mid streams and gardens in the seat of truth,  
Happy, near Muqtadir, the Mighty One.

Grant us that seat of truth to see,  
Almighty Allah! nigh to Thee.~

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Qur'an, liv. chapter "Of the Moon."





المُقَدِّم

70 Al-Muqaddim

The Forewarner

المُؤَخِّر

71 Al- Mu'akhir

The Fulfiller

*Muqaddim! Muakhir! by these names still  
Praise Him who hath forewarned, and doth fulfil.*

#### سُورَةُ الْقَافِ SURA "OF QĀF"

When the trumpet shall be ringing,  
Then the threatened Day hath come,  
Every soul to judgement bringing.<sup>64</sup>

Each soul shall itself deliver  
With two Angels, unto doom,  
With a Witness and a Driver.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Qur'an, I. chapter "Of Qāf."

He that driveth shall say, "Vainly  
Warned we thee, till this upholding  
Of the veil: now thou seest plainly."

And the Witness by his side,  
He shall say, a scroll unfolding,  
"This is what I testified."

Loud shall sound th'award eternal:  
"Hurl to hell the misbelievers,  
Sinners, liars; – let infernal

"Torments seize perverse transgressors!"  
Then will speak the wan deceivers,  
Seeking pleas and intercessors.

But the awful Voice shall thunder,  
"Wrangle not in Allah's hearing!  
Many a sign and many a wonder

"Did forewarn ye of repentance;<sup>65</sup>  
Time is past for more forbearing;  
Not with Us is change of sentence."


Heaven shall say to Hell that morning,  
"Art thou full?" Hell shall inquire,  
"Hast thou others?" blackly yawning

<sup>65</sup> The text is "I put forth unto you the menace."

With choked gullet. But believing  
Souls will see, brought nigh and nigher,  
Paradise's gates, receiving

Those to whom We promised Heaven.  
"Patient ones! for ever striving  
Towards the Merciful! forgiven

Are your falterings; enter ye  
Into peace; now is arriving  
The great Day of eternity."

Forewarner and Fulfiller! we  
Confess with dread Thine equity. 

72 Al-Awwal

The First

الأَوَّلُ  
حَدَّثَكَ

73 Al-Ākhir

The Last

الْآخِرُ  
حَدَّثَكَ

74 Az-Zāhir

The Manifest

الظَّاهِرُ  
حَدَّثَكَ

75 Al-Bāṭin

The Hidden

الْبَاطِنُ  
حَدَّثَكَ

❧ *Awwal! Ākhir! Zāhir! Bāṭin! these four*  
*Be "Mothers of the Names;"<sup>66</sup> thy Lord adore,*  
*Speaking such words as do Him truly call*  
*Essence and Substance, First and Last in all.*

#### THE MOTHERS OF THE NAMES

*Sura the seven and fiftieth:<sup>67</sup> there is writ*  
*The holy verse which keeps charge of it;*  
*The verse which all the names of Allah holdeth*  
*As in one sky the silver stars all sit.*

*The chapter "of the Iron!" – and this script*  
*Set on its forefront, as a hilt is tipped*  
*With four-fold gold; or as a helm of steel*  
*By some far-sparkling crest-gem is equipped.*

*"He is the First and the Last" – this scripture*  
*shows –*  
*"Outer and Inner, That which doth disclose,*  
*And That which hides Itself; the Manifest,*  
*The Secret; and all things and thoughts He*  
*knows."*

<sup>66</sup> These four divine titles are known by the technical appellation of  
"The Mothers of the Names," being regarded as fundamental and all-  
comprehensive.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lvii. chapter "Of Iron," v.3.

“In six days earth and heaven He made alone,  
Then reascended the Eternal Throne;  
What entereth earth and issueth thence He sees,  
And what goes up and down the sky is known.”

“To Allah, Who is nigh where'er ye be,  
And whatsoever deeds ye do doth see;  
His is the kingdom of the earth and heaven;  
All things return to Allah finally.”

Beginning! End! Without! Within!  
We celebrate Thy praise herein. ❧❧



76 Al-Wālī

The All-Governing

Laud Him who governs governors and kings,  
Angels, and Jinns, and men, and living things.

❧ SOLOMON'S SIGNET

Wot ye of Solomon's signet, graved of a sapphire in  
gold,  
Graved with the great name of God, writ on the blue  
of the stone?  
Wisdom and riches and power had he who that treasure  
did hold;  
Safe in the strength of the signet he sate on his ivory  
throne.

Only King Solomon knew how the dread letters did flow,  
What was the breathing of Aleph, where came the  
whispering Yod;  
When he spake the ineffable Word, the sea-winds at  
bidding would blow;  
And the hills yield their iron, and jewels, and gold,  
at the naming of God.

And out of the void of the sky, and up from the  
    gulfs and the capes,  
And forth from the caverns of earth, and down from  
    the mountains of flame,  
Flocked Demons with wonderful wings, and Ifreet of  
    horrible shape,  
And Jinns, with red eyes, made of fire; Divs, Peris,  
    and Giants, they came.

They came, at the call of the name, from Qāf, that  
    engirdles the seas;  
From the gloom of the tombs in the graveyard, from  
    ruins on desolate ground;  
From the pool and the marsh and the forest; from  
    poisonous blossoms and trees: –  
Monstrous or dwarfish, – constrained, enchained  
    subdued, by a sound;

The sound of the title of Allah, spoken so as the  
    Angels speak: –  
Nor spirits uncomely only, and evil; ethereal bands  
Thronged down from their heavenly houses, the Great  
    King's service to seek,  
Hearing that nameless Name which all things living  
    commands.

And the fowl and the beasts were fain to gather, each  
    creature by each,  
When Solomon summoned hereby, pronouncing the  
    mystical words.



Moreover, their dumb mouths opened, and the fly and  
the bee had a speech;  
And he knew the heart of the lions, and learned the  
mind of the birds.

Thus it is writ how he marched by Tayf from the  
Syrian land  
Through the "Valley of Ants" and heard the cry  
of the people of clay,  
"Hide ye! hide in the earth! for there passeth  
Solomon's band;  
We are many and wise, but we die, if the king's foot  
cometh this way."

And he laughed, but leaped to the ground, and bowed  
his forehead and said,  
"O Lord God! grant me to learn from the ant the  
wit to be meek.  
I am many and strong, and a king; yet Thou canst  
instantly tread  
The pride of this earth to dust, and the strongest  
to Thee are but weak!"

Then he viewed the birds, and cried, "I see not  
amongst ye here  
Al-Hudhud<sup>liii</sup>, the crested lapwing; what doth she to  
linger away?  
Ill shall it fall for her, who seeketh us water clear,  
If she find not a fountain for prayers before the  
ending of the day!

But they tarried not long until the whirr of her  
speckled wings  
Brought unto Solomon's feet the crested lapwing,  
who spake,  
"I have seen a queen that is greater than any save  
thee, O King!"  
In Seba she reigneth majestic, and glorious king-  
ship doth make.

"There hath she a marvellous throne of silver, figured  
with gold,  
And the head of the throne is a moon in a jasper  
and emerald curve;  
For her people worship the moon." And Solomon  
answered, "Behold!  
Little bird! if thou liest not, this queen shall the  
Merciful serve!"

Thereafter the message went from the servant of God,  
the king:  
"Solomon, son of David, to Bilqīs, queen of the  
south:  
Peace be to them that follow the Name upon Solomon's  
ring;  
Yield thee, and worship Allah; cursed is the idolatrous  
mouth."

Then Bilqīs sent him gifts, of gold bricks, yellow and  
red;  
And beautiful slaves five hundred, with amber and  
musk; and a gem

Drilled with a crooked hole, which never a goldsmith  
could thread;  
And a topaz of price, unpierced, and a diamond  
diadem.

He bade the sea-worm<sup>hw</sup> eat a way through the unpierced  
stone;  
And the little ant carry a thread through the  
ruby's crooked drill.  
"Doth she offer to Solomon gifts?" quoth he, on his  
ivory throne,  
"We are richer than Seba's kingdom! By Allah!"  
said he, "I will

"That one of my slaves bring hither Queen Bilqīs'  
jewelled seat;  
Thereby she shall learn that the glory is ours, and  
the knowledge and might."  
Then Āsaf the wise commanded, and a Jinn spread  
his pinions fleet,  
And brought the moon-throne thither, and set it  
before them aright.

In a guarded house she had shut it, which a thousand  
bowmen kept,  
But when she was come to Salem, lo! Solomon the  
king  
Sate there on her own gold seat, and Bilqīs bowed her  
and wept,  
Saying, "I pray thee, teach me the Name on thy  
signet ring!

"We have sinned against our souls, following lower  
Lords;  
Our kingdom we give, and our goods, and our lives,  
and our spirits to thine."

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Such worship had he of old who knew Al-Wālī's  
words  
Which rule the rulers, and knew the sound of the  
Name Divine.<sup>68</sup>

Ya Wālī! Gracious Lord! impart  
True knowledge of Thee, as Thou art. ❧

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxvii. chapter "Of the Ant."



## 77 Al-Muta‘ālī

The One Above  
Reproach

Praise Him, Al-Muta‘ālī! Whose decree  
Is wiser than the wit of man can see.

### ❧ MOSES AND THE ANGEL

‘Tis written in the chapter “of the Cave,”<sup>69</sup>  
An Angel of the Lord, a minister,  
Had errands upon earth, and Moses said,  
“Grant me to wend with thee, that I may learn  
God’s ways with men.” The Angel, answering, said,  
“Thou canst not bear with me; thou wilt not have  
Knowledge to judge; yet if thou followest me,  
Question me not, whatever I shall do,  
Until I tell thee.”

They found a ship  
On the sea-shore, wherefrom the Angel struck  
Her boards and brake them. Moses said, “Wilt drown  
The mariners? this is a strange thing wrought?”

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Qur’an, xviii.

“Did I not say thou couldst not bear with me?”  
The Angel answered – “be thou silent now!”

Yet farther, and they met an Arab boy:  
Upon his eyes with mouth invisible  
The Angel breathed; and all his warm blood froze,  
And, with a moan, he sank to earth and died.  
Then Moses said, “Slayest thou the innocent  
Who did no wrong? this is a hard thing seen!”  
“Did I not tell thee,” said the Minister,  
“Thou wouldst not bear with me? question me not!”

Then came they to a village, where there stood  
A lowly hut; the garden-fence thereof  
Topped to fall: the Angel thrust it down,  
A ruin of grey stones, and lime, and tiles,  
Crushing the lentils, melons, saffron, beans,  
The little harvest of the cottage folk.  
“What hire,” asked Moses, “hadst thou for this deed,  
Seeming so evil?”

Then the Angel said,  
“This is the parting betwixt me and thee;  
Yet will I first make manifest the things  
Thou couldst not bear, not knowing; that my Lord –  
‘Exalted above all reproach’ – be praised.  
The ship I broke serveth poor fisher-folk  
Whose livelihood was lost, because there came  
A king that way seizing all boats found whole;  
Now have they peace. Touching the Arab boy:  
In two moons he had slain his mother’s son,  
Being perverse; but now his brother lives,

Whose life unto his tribe was more, and he  
Dieth blood-guiltless. For the garden wall:  
Two goodly youths dwell there, offspring of one  
That loved his Lord, and underneath the stones  
The father hid a treasure, which is theirs.  
This shall they find, building their ruin up,  
And joy will come upon their house! But thou,  
Journey no more with me, because I do  
Nought of myself, but all by Allah's will."

*Al-Muta'ālī! Maker of men,  
Exalted art Thou past our ken. ❦*

## 78 Al-Barr

The Good



*Praise Him, Al-Barr! Whose goodness is so great;  
Who is so loving and compassionate.*

### THE ADULTERESS

Pity! for He is Pitiful – a king  
Is likest Allah, not in triumphing  
‘Mid enemies o’erthrown, nor seated high  
On stately gold, nor if the echoing sky  
Rings with his name, but when sweet mercy sways  
His words and deeds. The very best man prays  
For Allah’s help, since feeble are the best;  
And never shall man reach th’angelic rest  
Save by the vast compassion of Heaven’s King.  
Our Prophet ﷺ once, Aisha answering,  
Spake thus: “I shall not enter that pure place,  
Even I, except through Allah’s covering grace.”  
Even our Lord (on him be peace!); oh, see!  
If he besought the Sovereign Clemency,  
How must we supplicate it? Truly thus



Great need there is of Allah's grace for us,  
And that we live compassionate!

Hast seen

The record written of Ṣalah ad-Dīn  
The Sultan? how he met, upon a day,  
In his own city on the public way,  
A woman whom they led to die. The veil  
Was stripped from her weeping face, and pale  
Her shamed cheeks were, and wild her dark fixed eye,  
And her lips drawn with terror at the cry  
Of the harsh people, and the rugged stones  
Borne in their hands to break her, flesh and bones;  
For the law stood that sinners such as she  
Perish by stoning, and this doom must be;  
So went the wan adulteress to her death.  
High noon it was, and the hot khamseen's breath  
Blew from the desert sands and parched the town.  
The crows gasped, and the kine went up and down  
With lolling tongues; the camels moaned; a crowd  
Pressed with their pitchers, wrangling high and loud,  
About the tank; and one dog by a well,  
Nigh dead with thirst, lay where he yelped and fell,  
Glaring upon the water out of reach,  
And praying succour in a silent speech,  
So piteous were its eyes. Which when she saw,  
This woman from her foot she did draw,  
Albeit death-sorrowful, and looping up  
The long silk of her girdle, made a cup  
Of the heel's hollow, and thus let it sink  
Until it touched the cool black water's brink;  
So filled th'embroidered shoe, and gave a draught  
To the spent beast, which whined, and fawned, and quaffed  
Her kind gift to the dregs; next licked her hand,

With such glad looks that all might understand  
He held his life from her; then, at her feet  
He followed close, all down the cruel street,  
Her one friend in that city.

But the king,  
Riding within his litter, marked this thing,  
And how the woman, on her way to die,  
Had such compassion for the misery  
Of that parched hound: "Take off her chain, and place  
The veil once more above the sinner's face,  
And lead her to her house in peace!" he said.  
The law is that the people stone thee dead  
For that which thou hast wrought; but there is come,  
Fawning around thy feet, a witness dumb,  
Not heard upon thy trial; this brute beast  
Testifies for thee, sister! whose weak breast  
Death could not make ungentle. I hold rule  
In Allah's stead, who is 'Merciful,'  
And hope for mercy; therefore go thou free –  
I dare not show less pity unto thee!"

*As we forgive – and more than we –  
Ya Barr! good God! show clemency. ❧*



## 79 At-Tawwāb

### The Relenting

Praise Him, Al-Tawwāb; if a soul repents,  
Seven times and seventy times thy Lord relents.

#### ❦ ADAM QUITTING EDEN

At the gates of Paradise,  
Whence the angry Angels drave him,  
Adam heard in gentle wise  
Allah's whisper, which forgave him:  
"Go," it said, "from this fair place,  
Ye that sinned; yet not despairing;  
Haply there shall come a grace  
And a guidance; and in fearing  
Me, and following My will,  
Blessed shall your seed be still."<sup>70</sup>

Know ye not that God recieves  
Gladly back the soul which grieves?  
Know ye not that He relents  
Ere the sinner well repents?  
Terribly His justice burns,  
Easily His anger turns.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Spake our Lord: "If one draw near  
Unto God – with praise and prayer –  
Half a cubit, God will go  
Twenty leagues to meet him so.  
He who walketh unto God,  
God will run upon the road,  
All the quicklier to forgive  
One who learns at last to live."

Ya Tawwāb! for Thy mercy's sake,  
Us to sweet peace and pity take. ❧

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ix. chapter "Of Repentance."

جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ  
الْمُنْتَقِمُ

80 Al-Muntaqim

The Avenger

جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ  
الْعَفْوُ

81 Al-'Afuww

The Forgiver

"Forgiver!" and "Avenger!" worship Him  
By these two names, 'Afuww and Muntaqim.

#### HELL AND HEAVEN

72 O Men, of dry clay moulded, as the potter moulds  
the jars;  
O Jinns, that We have fashioned them from the  
smokeless  
fire of stars:  
What terror of the Lord will ye abide?

He is Lord of east and west, He is Lord of south  
and north;  
And the seas obey the limits which He set them,  
pouring forth:

72 Cf. Qur'an, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful."

What terror of the Lord will ye abide?  
Their white pearls, large and small, are the handiwork  
of Him;  
And the ships, with towering sails, by His winds and  
waters swim:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But the earth and all her creatures shall die and be  
decayed;  
Only the face of Allah will never change nor fade:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

The face of Allah ruling in glorious array;  
For all things look unto Him, and He governs day by  
day:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

Yet will He find good leisure, ye twain! ye Jinns  
and Men,  
To judge you at the judgment, O Clay and Flame!  
what then?  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

If ye can pass His gateways, east, west, and south and  
north –  
Which shut in earth and heaven – hasten ye! pass  
ye forth:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

But Life and Death enclose ye; by no way shall ye  
pass;

A fence of flame shall stay ye, and a moat of molten brass:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

And when the sky is rended, red like a new-ripped  
hide,  
There shall be no accusing, admitted or denied:  
Which terror of you Lord will ye abide?

No yea nor nay! no questions! the sinner's brand  
is sin;  
Thereby shall he be known, and flung Hell's blazing  
walls within:  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

Flung by the forelock and the feet: "This Hell existed  
not,'  
Ye said. Now broil! and when ye thirst, drink sulphur  
scalding hot:"  
Which terror of your Lord will ye abide?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

But sweet for him who was faithful, and feared the  
face of his God,  
Are the Gardens of joy preparing, and the gates of  
the Golden Abode:  
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

With leafy branching fruit-trees are set those Gardens  
twain,  
And softly the streamlets warble, and brightly the  
fountains rain:  
Which bounty of his Lord will he deny?

And the fruit of the Golden Gardens swings delicate,  
near to reach.

Where they rest on their 'broidered couches, hearing  
delightful speech:

Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?  
Therein are the shy-faced maidens, refraining their  
night-black eyes

From any save that glad lover whose joy is their  
Paradise:

Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?  
From any but that glad lover, that happy lord for whom  
Their mouths of pearl rain kisses, their lips of ruby bloom:

Which bounty of their Lord will they deny?

Shall the wages of righteous-doing be less than the  
promise given?

Nay! but by God, the Glorious, the debt shall be  
paid in heaven!

What bounty of their Lord shall they deny?

O man! fear Him, magnify Him;  
Al-'Afuww and Al-Muntaqim. ❧





## 82 Ar-Raūf

The Ever-Indulgent

Praise Him, Al-Raūf, Just and Kind alway,  
Who knoweth how He made us of the clay.

### سُورَةُ الشُّعَرَاءِ SURA "OF THE STAR"

Say, "Lord of all, to Thee  
Goeth our road;  
Require not of our souls  
Too much, dear God!  
Thou wilt not! what was earned  
Thou dost defray;  
And what was done amiss  
That we must pay;  
But ah! be not extreme  
With what's forgot,  
With error, or small sin.  
And load us not

With burdens which we cannot carry, Lord!  
But favour, help, forgiveness afford."<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ii. chapter "Of the Heifer."

Tender His answers are:—  
(The "Chapter of the Star,"<sup>74</sup>  
Ayat the Thirty-Third): "The heavens and the earth  
To Us pertain, and We  
Will deal, assuredly,  
Well with the good, but with the ill in wrath.  
Yet not for each offence,  
Errors of flesh or sense,  
Shall there be judgement, children of the loam!  
Our mercy reacheth far;  
We know ye what ye are,  
And knew ye while ye lay clots in the womb;  
Sin, and be sorry, and amend:  
Who seeketh God shall find Him in the end."

*Ever-indulgent Maker! we  
Praise for these words Thy clemency. ❧*

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Qur'an, liii. "Of the Star."

## 83 Mālik al-Mulk

King of the Kingdom



King of all kingdoms! only Thou art crowned,  
Whose throne is heaven, and earth Thy footstool's round.

### سُورَةُ الْاٰمِلِكَةِ SURA "OF THE EMIGRATION"

Ya Mālik! Ya Quddūs! wa ya Salām!  
O King! O Holy One! O Peace-giver!  
Ya Azīz! Ya Muḥaymin! Ya Mūmin!  
O Mighty! O Protector! Faithful ever!  
Ya Jabbār! O Thou Sovereign, All-compelling!  
Ya Mutakabbir! O Thou Lord excelling!

Exalted art Thou over utmost praise;  
Accurst are those who graven idols raise  
Beside Thee; unto them fall plagues and shames!  
To Thee alone belong "the comely names."<sup>75</sup>

King of all kings! we celebrate  
With endless praise Thy glorious state. ❧

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lix. chapter "Of the Emigration."

84 Dhū-l-Jalāli  
wa-l-Ikrām

Lord of Splendid Power



O "Lord of awfulness and honour!" we  
Lack wit and words in fitly naming Thee.



SURA "OF THE MERCIFUL"

All things shall die and decay, but the kingdom  
of Allah endureth,  
Changeless in honour and might, changeless in glory  
and grace;  
Blessed be He who is Lord, possessed of all beauty and  
greatness;  
All things die and decay; only endureth His face.<sup>76</sup>

Dhu'l Jalāli wa'l Ikrām! thus ever  
Praise we thy Throne which fadeth never. ~~~~~

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Qur'an, lv. chapter "Of the Merciful," vv. 26, 78



## 85 Al-Muqsit

The Equitable



Al-Muqsit! "Equitable!" make us know,  
As men have wrought, they shall be wrought with so.

### THE LAST SERMON OF THE PROPHET

Three days before our Lord Muhammad ﷺ passed,  
They bore him to the mosque, where he uprose –  
Painfully leaning upon Omar's neck –  
The fever burning in his cheeks, his mouth  
Dry with the wind of death, and that knit brow  
Shadowed with Azrael's overhanging wings.  
One thin hand on the mimbar-rail he laid,  
Speaking sweet words of guidance, precious words,  
The last which ever fell from those lit lips,  
Teaching his Faithful.

Then he gazed around,  
And said, "Ye men of Mecca, where I lived,  
Going and coming, testifying God,

I shall die soon; I pray ye answer me,  
Is there among ye here one I have wronged?  
I have borne rule, judging in Allah's name,  
That am a man and sinful; have I judged  
Unrighteously, or wrathfully, or pressed  
Too hard in the amend? Let who saith 'Yea,'  
Make his 'Yea' good before my people here,  
And I will bare my back that he may smite.  
I have borne testimony for the truth,  
Not sparing sinners; speak, if there be here  
One visited unjustly; let him shame  
His Prophet now, telling the sin I wrought  
Before the assembly. I have gathered dues;  
Declare if I defrauded any here  
Buying or selling."

And no answer came,  
Except the sound of sobs and falling tears  
From stern breasts and the eyes of bearded men,  
Because our Lord would pass.

But one arose,  
A hamal, with his cord across his back  
And porter's knot, who cried, "Abdallah's son!  
Three drachms of silver owest thou to me  
For wood I bore thee after 'Ramadan!'"

"Good friend, I thank thee," softly said our Lord,  
"Because thou didst demand thy money here,  
And not before the judgment seat of God:  
Ill is it if men thither carry debts!"  
Therewith he paid his debt, kissing the hand  
Wherein the dirhems dropped; and so went home

To die upon the lap of Aisha,  
With glad face fixed upon high, and holy lips  
That murmured, "Allah! pardon me my sins!"  
O ye believers! if our Lord did thus,  
Consider well! leave no unrighted wrongs  
Against the ill time when the Angels come,  
Munkar and Nakīr,<sup>lv</sup> gliding through the dark,  
And set ye up for question in the grave;  
When Isrāfil his dreadful trumpet blows,  
Summoning to judgment; when the skies roll back  
Like a scorched scroll, and o'er the gulf of hell  
Al-Şirāt<sup>vi</sup> stretches, "thinner than a hair  
And sharper than a sword," and yet to cross!  
Ah, then! what good one wrought, he hath of help  
Even to a date-stone; what of ill he wrought,  
Of hindrance, to a date-stone; for your God  
Is righteous, and the distribution just.

O just "Distributor!" incline  
Our hearts to keep Thy laws divine. ❧





## 86 Al-Jāmi'

### The Gatherer

*Al-Jāmi'! praise "the Gatherer," Who divides  
Evil and good unto their proper sides.*

#### سُورَةُ النِّسَاءِ SURA "OF WOMEN"

Ye who believe, stand ye steadfast in justice,  
Witnessing true though it be to displease;  
Heed not your patrons, nor parents, nor kinsmen,  
Allah is nearer and richer than these.

Sit ye not down in the seat of the scornful,  
Hear not the tales which the hypocrites tell;  
On the day when His children are folded together  
Al-Jami' shall scatter the sinners to hell.<sup>77</sup>

We take Thee for our Shepherd; keep  
Safe in the fold Thy foolish sheep. ~

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iv. chapter "Of Women," v. 139.

## 87 Al-Ghanī

The All-Sufficing



*We praise Thee; but no need of praise Thou hast,  
Al-Ghanī! in Thy glory bright and vast.*

### ❧ SURA "OF TROOPS"

Mighty is He and forgiving.<sup>78</sup>  
One soul did He first create,  
Then He made therefore a mate:  
And to help man in his living,  
Gave his herds, each with the other,  
Camels, oxen, goats and sheep.  
Think how Allah wakes from sleep  
The babe, close-folded in its mother!  
In three darknesses<sup>lvi</sup> He shrouds it;  
Wonder upon wonder clouds it.  
He is Maker: can ye see  
All these tokens and still be  
Thankless? Yet, if so ye are,  
Not beholden to your care

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxxix. chapter "Of the Troops."

Is Al-Ghanī: self-sufficing  
Lives high Allah, recognising  
Gladly all His creatures' love  
In a changeless peace above.  
Judge ye each for each; with God  
No man bears another's load.  
Unto Him in your return,  
Then shall every spirit learn  
What it wrought, and what is due;  
For He knows the hearts of you.

Ah, Self-sufficing One! we seek  
To praise Thee well, but words are weak.~\*~

## 88 Al-Mughnī

The Sufficer



He is sufficient, and He makes suffice;  
Praise thus again thy Lord, mighty and wise.

### سُورَةُ الْغَاثَةِ SURA "OF THE AFTERNOON"

God is enough! thou, who in hope and fear  
Toilest through desert-sands of life, sore-tried,  
Climb trustful over death's black ridge, for near  
The bright wells shine: thou wilt be satisfied.

God doth suffice! O thou, the patient one,  
Who puttest faith in Him, and none beside,  
Bear yet thy load; under the setting sun  
The glad tents glam: thou wilt be satisfied.

By God's gold Afternoon!<sup>79</sup> peace ye shall have;  
Man is in loss except he live aright,  
And help his fellow to be firm and brave,  
Faithful and patient: then the restful night!

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Qur'an, ciii. chapter "Of the Afternoon."

Al Mughnī! best Rewarder! we  
Endure; putting our trust in Thee. ۞

89 Al-Mu‘tī

The Provider



90 Al-Mānī‘

The Withholder



Mu‘tī and Mānī‘! Heav’n Thou mad’st, and Hell,  
Providing and withholding -- and didst well.

❧ THE TWO GATEWAYS

When God fashioned Paradise,<sup>80</sup>  
Spake He unto Gabriel:  
“See this place which We created,  
Where the justified will dwell.”  
Gabriel said, “My Lord! I swear  
By Thy glory, none of men  
Ever of its joys shall hear  
But will strive to enter it.”  
Round about His Paradise  
God set sorrows and denials;  
Laid the pathway steep and strait,

<sup>80</sup> Cf. “The Mishkāt-al-Maṣābiḥ.”

Hard to find and full of trials.  
"Look again!" God said; and he  
Looked, and came, and sadly spake:  
"By Thy glorious majesty,  
Not one man will entrance make!"

Then the Lord created Hell,  
Set ablaze its ache and grieving;  
Saying unto Gabriel,  
"This is for the unbelieving."  
Gabriel looked and said, "I swear,  
By Thy splendour, not a mortal,  
When of hell-fire he shall hear,  
Ever will approach its portal."  
Round about those awful gates  
Allah set soft sins and pleasures;  
Made the pathway broad and plain,  
Rich with joys and gifts and treasures.  
"Look again," said God; and he  
Saw; and spake, "Save by Thy blessing,  
O my Lord! there will not be  
One that must not love transgressing."

Lord of the two-fold roads, we pray  
Lead us upon the rightful way. ~\*

91 An-Nāfiʿ

The Propitious



"Propitious" is He unto those that show  
Compassion to His creatures; praise Him so.

❧ THE DOVE

"No beast of earth, no fowl that flies with wings,"  
Saith the great Book, "but is a people, too;  
From Allah sprang their life, and unto Him  
They shall return: with such heed what ye do!"

There came before our Lord a certain one  
Who said, "O Prophet! as I passed the wood,  
I heard the voices of youngling doves which cried,  
While near the nest their pearl-necked mother  
cooed."

"Then in my cloth I tied those fledgelings twain,  
But all the way the mother fluttered nigh;  
See! she hath followed hither!" Spake our Lord:  
"Open thy knotted cloth, and stand thou by."  
But when she spied her nestlings, from the palm



Down flew the dove, of peril unafear'd  
So she might succour these. "Seest thou not,"  
Our Lord said, "how the heart of this poor bird

"Grows, by her love, greater than his who rides  
Full-faced against the spear-blades? thinkest thou  
Such fire divine was kindled to be quenched?  
I tell ye nay! Put back upon the bough

"The nest she claimeth thus. I tell ye nay!  
From Allah's self cometh thus wondrous love:  
Yea! and I swear by Him who sent me here,  
He is more tender than a nursing dove,

"More pitiful to men than she to these.  
Therefore fear God in whatsoe'er ye deal  
With the dumb peoples of the wing and hoof.  
Yours are they; yet whene'er ye lift the steel

"To slay for meat, name first the name of God,  
Saying 'Bi'sm'illah! God judge thee and me!  
God give thee patience to endure to-day  
The portion that He hath allotted thee.'

"So shall ye eat and sin not; else the blood  
Crieth against you." Thus our Prophet ﷺ spake,  
And Islam doeth it, naming God's names  
Before the slaughter,<sup>lviii</sup> – for that white dove's sake.

By those dumb mouths be ye forgiven,  
Ere ye are heard pleading with Heaven. ❧

## 92 Aḍ-Ḍārr

The Harmful



Aḍ-Ḍārr! "Harmful" He is to them that sin  
Mocking the truth; O man! fear Him herein.

### ❧ KING SHEDDĀD'S PARADISE

Sheddād, the son of ʿĀd, of Hadramaut,  
Idolator, lord of the land and sea,  
Hath it come to ye how he mocked at Heaven,  
Saying the idols of the coast were best –  
Sākia that makes the rain, and Hāfedha  
The Thunderer, Razek who gives grain to men,  
And Sālema, lady of life and death? –  
And how he swore an oath by those four gods,  
Drinking the palm-wine deep at Hadramaut,  
That he would build a better Paradise  
Than Allah's, and be Lord and God therein;  
With earthly Houris fairer than those maids  
Wrought of the musk and ambergris, who have  
The great immortal breasts and black-pearl eyes;  
With sweeter streams than Salsabīl,<sup>81</sup> and trees

<sup>81</sup> A stream of Paradise.

Richer in fruit than Tūbā:<sup>82</sup> this he sware,  
 Abiding not the judgment, nor the blasts  
 Of Isrāfil, nor weighing of the scales.  
 Wherefore he gave command that there be built  
 In Akhaf, on the hills, beyond the sand –  
 Within a hollow vale walled by wild peaks –  
 A pleasure-house – beautiful with white courts  
 Of levelled marble, and in every court  
 A fountain, sparkling from a tank inlaid  
 With amber, nacre, coral; and around,  
 In every court, cloisters of columns carved  
 With reeded shafts and frontals, wonderful  
 For beast and bird and fish and leaf and flower.  
 And round about this pleasure-house he bade  
 A lovely garden bloom, terraced by lanes  
 Bosky with blossoming trees and rose-thickets,  
 Where hidden streamlets murmured and gold fruit  
 Loaded the boughs, and all the air was balm.  
 He gave command, moreover, that there rise  
 Hard by, with streets and markets, a fair town  
 Peopled by ministers of pleasure, and walled  
 With ramparts of the rose and pomegranate;  
 Wherethrough there led a double folding gate,  
 Fashioned of fragrant woods, and set with stars  
 Of silver, opening downwards to the vale,  
 Inscribed "The Paradise of Kind Sheddād."  
 And when the house was made, and all the courts  
 Were girdled with the carven shafts, and cooled  
 With leaping fountains; and the roses, blown,  
 Filled the green vale with sweetness; and the town

<sup>82</sup> The Tree of Happiness, which grows from the Prophet Muhammad's pavilion in Paradise.

Was heaped with grain and wine, and people moved  
Busy and glad about its new fair streets,  
Sheddād set forth. A shining line of spears,  
League-long, wound first upon the mountain-path;  
And after them the camel-litters, decked  
With silk and gold, and poles of silver, came  
Bearing the Houris of his Paradise;  
And next the Prince amid his lords: so clomb  
The gay march up the sandy steeps, or streamed  
Down the grey wadis. At the head of all  
Rode one who held a flag of yellow silk,  
Which had for its device, "Amid his gods,  
Sheddād, the son of 'Ād, of Hadramaut,  
Unasked of Allah, wends to Paradise."

That night they entered at the silver gate,  
Making bold cheer; and sweet the garden was,  
And green the groves, and bright the pleasure-house  
Lit with a thousand scented lamps, and loud  
With dance and cymbal and the beat of drum.  
But when the golden horse-shoe of the moon  
Waned in the west, there came into the sky  
Three clouds; and one was white and had the shape  
Of a winged angel; one was red and burned  
Across the planets like a blazing sword;  
And one, thick black, gathered around the head  
Of a bare hollow mountain, seamed with gaps  
And caverns, wherefrom – full upon their feast –  
Brake, of a sudden, flame and cataracts  
Of blood-red molten rock, with pitchy smoke  
Veiling the heavens, and rain of blinding dust,

All pierced by livid lightning-spears, and driven  
By fierce winds, hotter than the breath of hell;  
Which sucked the streams, and parched the trees, and dried  
Life from the body, as a furnace draws  
The moisture from the potter's clay, while earth  
Rocked, quaking; and the thunder's vengeful voice  
Rolled horrible from crag to crag, and mocked  
The death-cry of those choked idolators:  
Whereof, when the sun rose, there breathed not one;  
Nor any green thing lingered in the vale;  
Nor road nor gate appeared; nor might a man  
Say where the garden of Kind Sheddād stood:  
So were the ways upturn, and that fair sin  
Blotted from vision by the wrath of God.

Yet to this day there lurketh – lost to view  
Of all men, hardly found by wandering wolf,  
Spied seldom by the vulture's hungry eyes –  
The remnant of the garden of Iram.  
Deep in the wilderness of Aden, hid  
Behind wild peaks, and fenced with burning sands,  
The perished relics of that pleasaunce lie  
Which Sheddād made, mocking the power of God:  
And one who tended camels in the land,  
Abdallah-Ibn-Kelābah, seeking there  
A beast estrayed, followed her footmarks up  
Into a gorge, which split a cliff in twain  
From sky to sand, dark as the heart of night,  
With thickets at its mouth and jutting rocks.  
Therethrough he pushed, and when the light once more  
Glimmered and grew, he spied a hollow, shut

In the gaunt barren peaks, with black dust strewn,  
And piled with cindery crags and bladdered slag,  
In midst of which lay – plain to see – the bones  
Of Sheddād's city and his pleasure-house;  
All with their withered gardens, and the gate  
Rusted and ruined; and the cloistered courts  
Swathed in the death-drift, and the marble tanks  
Choked to their brims; the carven columns fall'n  
Or thrust awry; the bright pavilions foul  
With ashes, and the remnants of the dead:  
For Ibn-Kelābah passed into the place,  
And saw the valley thronged with carcases  
Of men and women and the townspeople –  
Not mouldered, as is wont, to whitened bone,  
But dried, by the hot blasts of that dread night,  
Unto a life in death; the skin and flesh  
Yet clinging, and the robes of festival  
Still gay in colour; all those sinful ones  
Slain in their sin even where the whirlwind struck:  
So that he saw the dancers as they fell  
With dancing-dress and timbrels; and the ring  
Of watchers round them; and the slaves who made  
Their music; and the bearers bringing wine,  
Each by his shrivelled wineskin, dead and dry.  
Also within the courts, lay corpses slim,  
Rich-clad and delicate, with jewelled necks,  
The Houris of that ruined Paradise.  
The sunken eyes stared, and the drawn lips grinned  
Under dead rose-crowns, and the shapely limbs

Were grown too lean for the loose tarnished gold  
Of armlet and of anklet; dusty lay  
Strings of dulled jewels on their shrunken breasts;  
And brimmed with dust the cups were which they clasped  
In stiff discoloured fingers. In their midst  
Sate, all a-gape, King Sheddād, for a throne  
Propped his dead form, and round the waist of it  
A sword hung, in a belt of gold and silk,  
Hilted with pearls and rubies. This he took –  
The camel-man – and glided, terrified,  
Back from that City of the Dead; and found  
The night-black gorge, and groped his way, and brought  
The sword and sword-hilt into Hadramaut,  
Telling the dread things seen of Allah's wrath  
Wrought on the misbelievers; and their streets  
Wrecked, and their painted courts, people with the dead.  
Such awful end came on the men of 'Ād,  
Who made the House of Iram; and their lord.

But no foot since hath found that road again,  
Nor shall; till Isrāfil sets to his lips  
The trumpet, and Aḍ-Ḍārr will bid him blow.

O Harmful unto mockers! we  
Know and adore Thy majesty. ~

## 93 An-Nūr

Light



An-Nūr! "The Light" that lightens all who live!  
By this great name to Allah glory give.

### ❧ SURA "OF LIGHT"

Of earth and heaven God is the Light. <sup>83</sup>  
As when a lamp upon a height  
Is set within a niche, and gleams  
From forth the glittering glass, and seems  
A star, – wide fall the rays of it:–  
So shines His glory, and 'tis lit  
With holy oil was never pressed  
From olive tree in east or west.  
It burneth without touch of flame,  
A light beyond all light: the same  
Guideth the feet of men, and still  
He leadeth by it whom He will.

Light of the world! An-Nūr! illumine  
Our darkling pathway to the tomb. ❧

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xxiv. chapter "Of Light."





## 94 Al-Hādī

### The Guide

Al-Hādī! Lord! the way is hard, and we,  
Thy creatures, have none other "Guide" than Thee.

#### THE FOUR TRAVELLERS

By many names and guides doth God  
Lead men along the upward road;  
He, unto each land under Heaven,  
A prophet of its own hath given:  
Hūd, Idrīs, Ayūb, Moses, – all  
Upon the self-same Lord did call;  
Seeing there is no way besides  
His way, the Guiders of the guides;  
Nor any light to mortals known  
Except Al-Hādī – His alone.

'Tis told, nigh to a city-gate  
Four fellow-travellers hungry sate,  
An Arab, Persian, Turk and Greek;  
And one was chosen forth, to seek  
Their evening meal, with dirhems thrown  
Into a common scrip; but none  
Could with his fellows there agree

What meat wherewith should purchased be.  
 "Buy uzum," quoth the Turk, "which food  
 Is cheaper, sweeter, or so good?"  
 "Not so," the Arab cried, "I say  
 Buy aneb, and the most ye may."  
 "Name not thy trash!" the Persian said,  
 "Who knoweth üzüm or aneb?  
 Bring anghur, for the country's store  
 Is ripe and rich." The Greek, who bore  
 Their dirhems, clamoured, "What ill thing  
 Is anghūr? Surely I will bring  
 Staphylion green, staphylion black,  
 And a fair meal we shall not lack."  
 Thus wrangled they, and set to try  
 With blows what provend he should buy,  
 When, lo! before their eyes did pass,  
 Laden with grapes, a gardener's ass.  
 Sprang to his feet each man, and showed  
 With eager hand, that purple load.  
 "See uzum!" said the Turk; and "See  
 Anghur!" the Persian; "what should be  
 Better?" "Nay, aneb! Aneb 'tis!"  
 The Arab cried. The Greek said, "This  
 Is my staphylion!" Then they bought  
 Their grapes in peace.

Hence ye be taught!

But unto us Thy changeless name  
 Is Allah – praised be the same. ❧

الْأَزَلِ

## 95 Al-Azalī

The Eternal in  
the Past

الْبَاقِ

## 96 Al-Bāqī

The Eternal in  
the Future

### سُورَةُ "وَيْلٌ" "OF YĀ SĪN"

Al-Azalī! Al-Bāqī! praise to Thee  
Who wast before Beginning, and will be  
After the Ending. From Thy mercy came  
Man's breath, and unto Thee returns the same.

Al A'rāf<sup>84</sup> saith – the seventh of "the Book:" –  
In the Beginning God from Adam took  
All who should be his seed, and bade them bear  
Witness upon themselves, putting His fear  
And knowledge in the hearts of all to be,  
As salt is set in all the waves of the sea.  
A countless, nameless, throng there gathered they,  
That unborn multitude; and God did say,  
"Testify! Am I not your Lord?" And those

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Qur'an, chapter vii. verse 172.

Replied, "Yea, Lord! we testify!" Propose  
Never, then, Man! to say, "we did not have  
Guidance;" it shall be answered, "Allah gave  
With life that light which leadeth to the grave."

And in the chapter of "Yā Sīn"<sup>85</sup> it saith –  
Read in the Muslim's ear at hour of death:- <sup>86</sup>  
A blast! and then another blast! and, lo!  
At summons of the trumpet, all shall go  
Forth from their grave-beds, thronging once again  
Unto their Lord; and some, in fear and pain,  
Shall cry, "Woe, woe! what waketh us? Is this  
God's word come true?" and some, in joy and bliss  
Shall say, "Now praise to God! His prophets spake  
Truth unto us." For mankind shall wake  
Together, at the trumpet; and we shall wend  
Together, to the Judgement, in the end.

And no soul shall be wronged in that dread place  
For aught not wrought; nor any soul find grace  
Except for what it wrought; and there shall fall  
Endless delight in Paradise on all  
Who kept that witness! happy they shall be  
Reclining with sweet consorts, 'neath the Tree  
Which bears all fruits, and groweth by the Throne.  
And they shall hear the Lord say to His own,  
"PEACE!" – they shall hear the Merciful say so.

But to the sinners shall be thundered, "Go!

<sup>85</sup> Qur'an, chapter xxxvi.

<sup>86</sup> This Sura is recited as the deathbed of Muslims.

Divide herefrom! did ye not testify?"

"Yea, dreadful Lord!" – thus shall they make reply,  
Descending into Hell.

Thy mercy send,

Thou, the Beginning and the End! ❧

## 97 Al-Wāriṭh

### The Inheritor



Inheritor! all things proceed from Thee,  
And re-committed to Thy hands shall be.

#### THE ROSE AND THE DEWDROP

The chapter of Al-Hijr:<sup>87</sup> There is nought  
But from the treasury of God was brought;  
Such and so much He lends them; winds and waters;  
Have ye the store of these things, or of aught?

Did ye set in the sky the starry band,  
Or pile the mountain peaks upon the land?  
Verily He hath made and will unmake them,  
And all these shall return into His hand.

"O Rose!" the Dewdrop said, "whence didst thou spring,  
That art so sweet and proud and fair a thing?"  
"From dust I sprang," she said, "and ere to-morrow  
Back to dust I shall be mouldering."

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Qur'an, chapter xv. verse 21.

"O Dewdrop!" said the Rose, "where didst thou gain  
This light, that like a gem on me hath lain?"

"A cloud," he said, "uplifted me from ocean,  
And I must trickle to the deep again."

The Bulbul heard; "O Allah's rose!" it said,  
"The air is fragrant with thee, being dead;  
O Allah's Dewdrop! ere the sea did suck thee,  
She was fairer; be thou comforted!"

For saith the chapter of Al-Hijr: "Tell  
My servants I have made the heavens well,  
And the earth well, and with steadfast purpose;  
And Paradise is Mine, and Mine is Hell."<sup>88</sup>

*Inheritor! all things are Thine;  
Al-Wārith! O Thou might Divine!* ❦

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xv. Vv. 49, 85.

## 98 Ar-Rashīd

The Unerring



Earth knows, heaven shows; the holy scriptures say,  
How righteous and “unerring” is Thy way.

### THE PROPHET’S OATH

“We sent it down upon the ‘Night of Power,’<sup>89</sup>  
The Book which ‘doth declare.’  
In all the year that night is best: one hour  
Thereof, in praise and prayer,

“Is worth a thousand days of joy; for then  
The Angles bear commands,  
Bringing the will of Ar-Rashīd to men;  
Descending upon all lands.

“Peace ruleth till the rising of that dawn,  
While Allah doth ordain  
How many souls those twelve moons shall be born,  
How many shall attain

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Qur'an, xcvi. chapter “Of Power.”



“His mercy; for the books are brought of these,  
And each account is cast;  
And Allah maketh ‘the allowances,’  
Accepting souls at last.”

Thus spake our Lord, and Aisha replied,<sup>90</sup>  
“O Prophet! are there none  
Accepted, save by mercy?” “None!” he cried,  
“By God! I say not one!”

“Not thou! – not even thou! – thou not to go,  
Unquestioned, into heaven,  
Who walked with Allah’s Angels, and below  
Taught us the message given?” –

He drew his cloth across his bended face,  
And thrice he spake to her:  
“Except by God’s mercy cover me with grace.  
I shall not enter there!”

O Ar-Rashīd! and if not he,  
Increase to us Thy clemency. ❧

<sup>90</sup> Cf. the *Mishkāt-al-Maṣābīh*.

## 99 Aṣ-Ṣabūr

The Patient



O loving-kind, "long-suffering" Lord! once more  
We praise Thee, magnifying Aṣ-Ṣabūr.

### ❧ ISLAM

Patient is Allah, and He loveth well  
The patient, saith "the Book,"<sup>91</sup> and such as dwell  
In kindness, asking pardon of their sins  
Each dawn, and pardoning the blameable.

Islam! this is the Faith! thyself resign,  
Soul, mind, and body, to the will divine:  
The kingdom and the glory and the power  
Are God's, and God's the government, – not thine!

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Qur'an, iii. v. 15, chapter "Of Imran's Family."

THERE IS NO GOD BUT GOD! and He is All;  
And whatso doth befall ye doth befall  
By His decree: therefore, with fear and love  
Upon His glorious names devoutly call.

*Allah! His holy will be done!*  
*Islam! — we bow before His throne. ~*



# Afterword

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## The Concept of God in Islam

THE FIRST PART of the Muslim confession of faith (the shahada) is the basis for the concept of God In Islam. The Muslim bears witness that: "There is no god but God", or "no divinity but the (one) Divinity". The revealed Scripture of Islam, the Qur'an, is like a vast commentary on this simple statement, drawing from it all its implications for human life and thought.

This conception of the Deity is strictly monotheistic and unitarian. God alone has absolute being, totally independent and totally self-sufficient. Whatever exists or ever could exist does so by His will. He has no "partner" either in creating the universe or in maintaining it in existence. He is not only the "First Cause" but also ultimately, the only cause, and He is Himself uncaused. The Qur'an tells us: "Say: He is Allah, One, the utterly Self-sufficient; He begets not neither is He begotten, and there is nothing that is like unto Him". It tells us also that: "When He wills a thing to be, He but says unto it—Be!; and it is".

A further implication of the first part of the shahada is that there can be no power, force or agency in the heavens or on earth which is independent of God. Everything that exists—and everything that happens—is subject to His control; there is nothing that can compete with Him or that escapes His grasp, nothing that does not bear witness to His creative power and majesty. "The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him", says the Qur'an, "and there is not a thing that does not hymn His praise, though ye understand not their praise".

In the Islamic view, it is impossible for the human mind to form an adequate conception of God as He is in His eternal and absolute being. The creature cannot comprehend the Creator. According to the Qur'an, "No (human) vision encompasseth Him, yet He encompasseth (all) vision".

But Islam does not demand blind belief. The Qur'an tells us a great deal about the nature of the Divine, and it describes God by

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a number of terms – called “the most beautiful Names” – which help us to understand Him. The Qur’an tells us: “Allah, there is no god but He, the Living, the eternally Self-subsistent. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belong all that is in the heavens and all that is upon earth. Who is there that (can) intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they comprehend naught of His knowledge save what He pleases. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He is not wearied by preserving them; and He is the Most High, the Immense”.

He is Al-Aḥad, The One, absolute unity. This is in sharp contrast to the Christian conception of the Trinity. The One cannot be divided, nor can it be diminished or “humanised” by incarnation in any created form. God does not become His own creature, in fact He does not “become” anything; He is.

The Qur’an describes Him also as Al-‘Alī, the Most High, totally transcendent in relation to His own creations and therefore infinitely beyond all that we might attempt to associate with Him. He is Al-‘Azīz, the Almighty, and Al-Jabbār, the Irresistible, for there is no one and nothing that could possibly resist His power, which governs and regulates all existence in accordance with a predetermined measure. It follows that there is no earthly power that is not derived from Him, no strength nor any virtue that is not loaned to us by Him; and no one can help us except by His will, nor can anyone harm us unless He permits them to do so (in which case this harm is a trial to be borne with patience).

He is called Al-Ḥaqq, the Truth (or the Reality), and to deny Him is to be far distant from truth at every level of experience. The Arabic word for such “deniers” (or “unbelievers”) is Al-Kāfirūn, and this word suggests a deliberate act of “covering”; in other words those who deny Him whose name is “the Truth”, have “covered” their own understanding with an opaque covering so as not to see what is ultimately self-evident. In so doing they have shut out the light, for another of His names is An-Nūr, Light. These are they

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whom the Qur'an describes as the "blind", for "Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth". In Islam everything is derived from the divine nature and therefore from the "names" by which God has made Himself known, and if He were not "Light" there could be no light anywhere, whether intellectual or physical.

Nothing escapes His knowledge, not even our most secret thoughts for He is Al-'Alīm, the Omniscient who knows everything in the heavens and the earth, and Al-Khabīr, the All-Aware from whom nothing is hidden. He is Ash-Shāhid, the Witness and, as such, He is described also as Al-Baṣīr, the Seer and As-Samī', the Hearer. "Who is the Owner of hearing and of sight?" asks the Qur'an, and it answers "Allah!" We see only what is before our eyes, with their very limited range, but no limit is set to His vision; we hear only sounds that are either very loud or very close to us, but He hears everything. "And with Him are the keys of the Invisible", says the Qur'an. "None but He knoweth them, and He knoweth what is in the land and the sea. Not a leaf falls but He knoweth it, nor a grain amidst the darkness of the earth..."

He is Al-Awwal, the First before whom there is nothing, and Al-Akhīr, the Last, after whom there is nothing; but He is not only at the beginning and at the end of time, for He is also Az-Zahīr, the Outward, present behind all the shifting scenes we perceive in the world around us, and Al-Bāṭin, the Inward, for it is His power that moves and motivates all that exists.

He is not only Al-Khāliq, the Creator, who gives each separate thing the light of existence by His command "Be!", but He is also Al-Muṣawwir who "shapes" it in accordance with the nature He wishes it to have, for everything in the world has its purpose and is moulded to serve that purpose.

When creatures have been brought into existence and fashioned in accordance with the divine purpose, they are not abandoned and left to fend for themselves. Two very particular "names" stand at the very centre of the Islamic concept of God. These are Ar-Raḥmān and Ar-Raḥīm. Both are derived from the

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Arabic word for “Mercy”, *rahma*, which is closely related to the word for “womb” and therefore carries with it implications of creativeness and fecundity. In one of the inspired sayings in which God spoke to mankind through the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ we are told that His “Mercy” takes precedence over His “Wrath”.

There are different opinions as to the exact distinction between the names *Ar-Rahmān* and *Ar-Rahīm* (which are placed at the beginning of all but one of the chapters of the Qur’an). The former is usually translated as the Merciful and the latter as the Compassionate. It is said that the former describes God as He is in His eternal nature and that everything is brought into existence through the overflowing of His innate “Mercy”, while the latter – *Ar-Rahīm* – refers to the blessings He pours out upon His creatures.

In whatever way we translate these words, the essential concept is not in doubt. God is infinitely merciful, first in giving us life and the means to enjoy life, secondly in caring for us and satisfying our legitimate needs. This concept is amplified by other divine names contained in the Qur’an. God is described as *Al-Karīm*, the Generous, and as *Al-Wadūd*, the Loving-Kind; He is also *Ar-Razzāq*, the Provider who nourishes us both spiritually and physically.

Despite this outpouring of mercy, we still go astray, for man – as the Qur’an tells us – was “created weak”, and our situation might seem hopeless if God were not *At-Tawwāb*, the Relenting, who never tires of turning back to His creatures when they turn to Him in repentance. He is *Al-Ghafūr*, the Ever-Forgiving, and *Al-‘Afuww*, the Effacer (of sins). Whatever people may do in the course of their lives they have the opportunity to seek this forgiveness so long as they have breath, but the opportunity is lost when death comes and, after that, they are judged for what they are or for what they have made of themselves. So the Qur’an says: “O My servants who have damaged your own selves despair not of the Mercy of Allah. Truly Allah pardons all sins. Truly He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. So turn unto your Lord repentant and sur-



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render unto Him before the punishment comes upon you; then ye will not be helped”.

But “sinning” and “going astray” would have no clear meaning if God had not shown His creatures the right way, the “straight path” as it is called in the Qur’an. One of His names is Al-Hādi, the Guide. We are assured that He has never left any nation or any group of people without guidance; to each He has sent a “messenger” to deliver them a “message” of hope and guidance and to instruct them as to how to follow the “straight way” which leads to Paradise and, ultimately, to Ar-Riḍwān, the Good Pleasure or Satisfaction of God Himself. These divine “messages” have been clothed in the language and thought-patterns of the people to whom they were addressed so as to be clear and unambiguous, and the “messengers” who have been the instruments of this guidance have been men like other men, though in every way better than others.

In spite of their clarity, these “messages” have again and again been rejected by many of those to whom they were addressed, and it is precisely this freedom to reject the truth that distinguishes man from the other creatures who share the earth with us – the animals, the birds and the fishes. They follow by instinct the way set before them, the law of their species, but mankind has the unique freedom either to follow the “straight path” consciously and deliberately or to turn away from it and follow the dictates of self-will. Man alone has been given a mind capable of understanding the truth, a will capable of choosing the path of truth, and a heart inclined by its very nature to love the truth.

“For each of you have We appointed a divine Law and a way of life,” says the Qur’an; “Had Allah so willed, He could have made you one people; but so that He may try you by that which He hath bestowed upon you, (He hath willed otherwise). So compete in doing good. Unto Allah ye will all return, and He will inform you regarding that wherein ye differ”. In terms of this and other similar verses, it is entirely possible for Muslims to accept the idea that

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the pre-Islamic religions were at least partial statements of the One Truth, adapted to time and place and to the spiritual needs of different peoples.

The Muslim however believes that the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ completes the vast structure of revelation and provides a final synthesis, after which there is nothing more to be said. Judaism and Christianity are both “monotheistic” religions, but Muslims consider that the Jews appropriated the universal Truth, claiming it as the property of one single people, while the Christians redefined it through the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation<sup>1</sup>. In the Islamic view, the “message” transmitted through Muhammad ﷺ represented, not a completely new religion, but a corrective to the falsifications and distortions which had taken place and, at the same time, an uncompromising re-assertion of the pure doctrine of the One God.

According to the Islamic concept, God demands of us three things. The first is a constant awareness of Him, even in the midst of our worldly activities. This awareness is expressed in two words which constantly recur in the Qur’an. *Taqwa* is commonly translated either as “fear of God” or “God consciousness”; both translations are acceptable, since we cannot be truly “conscious” of Him without experiencing a profound sense of awe which results in a healthy fear of displeasing Him or offending against His laws. The Arabic word *dhikr*, meaning both “mention” and “remembrance”, has a more devotional connotation, and we are assured that God is present with us when we “remember” Him or

1 The fact that the earliest followers of Jesus regarded him as purely human is evident from the many theological controversies which persisted during the first three or four centuries of the Christian era. Thus, some renowned theologians, like Theodotus of Byzantium, who lived towards the end of the second century, and his followers – among them Paul of Samosata, Bishop of Antioch in the year 260 – maintained that the “sonship of God” mentioned in the then-existing texts of the Gospels was purely symbolic, denoting no more than that Jesus was a human being exalted by God. The originally widespread teachings of Bishop Arius (280-326) centred in the concept of Jesus as a mortal man chosen by God

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“mention” His name. Although Islam lays a great emphasis on the divine transcendence, the Qur’an speaks on many occasions of the “closeness” of God to His believing servants: “He is with you wheresoever you may be”, and “We are closer to him (man) than his jugular vein”. We read also in the Qur’an that “it is in the remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah that hearts find rest”.

Secondly, He demands of us that we should obey His commandments, which are in no way arbitrary; whether we know it or not, they are for our own good and are, therefore, an aspect of the divine Mercy. Their purpose is to maintain a healthy balance both within the human personality and in society and, at the same time, to provide a stable framework for human living. In Islam God is the only Legislator or Lawgiver. We cannot legislate effectively for ourselves since our laws would inevitably be designed in accordance with our short-term desires. From the commands and prohibitions contained in the Qur’an and from the teachings and example of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is derived the Shari’ah, the Law which governs every aspect of the Muslim’s life on earth

Finally, since we are by nature weak and inclined to self-indulgence, God demands of us sincere repentance when we have failed to live up to what He requires of us. Muslims recognise that our weakness, however much we may deplore it, has a positive aspect, for if we were strong we would be tempted to see ourselves as self-reliant little “gods” quite independent of our Creator. Being weak by nature we soon find that we cannot rely either upon ourselves or upon other people and this obliges us to turn to Him whom the Qur’an describes as *Al-Wakil*, the Utterly Reliable. “There is no power and no strength except with Allah”, according to one of Muhammad’s ﷺ favourite sayings.

The unfolding of human destinies, obedient or disobedient, as for specific task, and in the concept of God as absolutely One, unknowable, and separate from every created being: this doctrine, however, was ultimately condemned by the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), and gradually ceased to have any influence on the Christian masses. The Message of the Qur’an – translated by Mohamed Assad, 1980.

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the case may be, takes place against a meaningful background. In the Islamic view, God creates nothing without a purpose. "Do you not see", says the Qur'an "that Allah hath created the heavens and the earth with (and by) the Truth?" The whole universe is filled – like a great picture-book – with "signs" which bear witness to its Creator and which remind us, if we have pure hearts and seeing eyes, of His power, His majesty and His beauty. The Qur'an tells us: "Indeed, in the heavens and the earth are signs for believers, and in your creation and in all the beasts that He has scattered upon the earth are signs for people whose faith is sure; and in the difference of night and day and in the provision that Allah sendeth down from the heavens and thereby quickeneth the earth after her death – and in the ordering of the winds – are signs for people of understanding".

This serves to emphasize an essential element in the Islamic conception of God. Our existence and the existence of the whole universe around us are proofs of God, and this is cogently expressed in another passage from the Qur'an: "We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves until it is clear to them that this is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice thee, since He is witness over all things? And so – are they still in doubt about the meeting with their Lord? Doth He not indeed encompass all things?"

To sum up: the God of Islam is transcendent, the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator and Lawgiver, though at the same time infinitely merciful, generous and forgiving. Man, His creature and His servant into whom He has breathed something of His spirit, stands before Him without intermediary or intercessor, meeting Him through prayer during this brief life on earth and meeting Him face-to-face when life is over. In Islam, God does not embody Himself in any human being or make Himself accessible through idols and images.

But he does make Himself accessible through His revealed Names. We, in our small way, can exemplify these qualities and

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attributes in our daily lives. Inspired and aided by the Most Merciful we can show mercy. Inspired and aided by the One who creates Guidance we can guide our fellow men and women. Through His Light our lives may be illuminated. What we cannot hope to exemplify fully is His Perfection, but we can love it whole-heartedly. We love those who are kind to us, and God is Kindness itself. We love generosity when it is directed towards us, and He is the Selflessly Generous One. We are irresistibly drawn towards beauty, and He is the source of all Beauty. Above all, we love Perfection, and we seek it in vain in this imperfect world. We find it in God, who is alone perfect, and the Qur'an tells us that "the believers are strong in their love of God". At the end of the road, sign-posted by the divine Names, the Muslim rejoices in an overwhelming love for the One who awaits us at journey's end.

Gai Eaton





## NOTES

- i One version of this legend says that Soharah (Or Zoharah) herself, the spirit of the planet Venus, descended to tempt the two Angels. Hārūt and Mārūt are fabled to be confined still in the vicinity of Babel, where a man may go to learn sorcery from them, hearing their voices, but never seeing their forms.
- ii Gabriel, or Jibrīl, is called in Arabian theology Rūḥ al-Amin, "the Faithful Spirit, or Rūḥ al-Quddus, "the Holy Spirit." It was he who delivered the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
- iii A commentator on this legend writes:

"Some say that Solomon brought these horses, being a thousand in number, from Damascus and Nisibis, which cities he had taken; others say that they were left him by his father, who took them from the Amalekites; while others, who prefer the marvellous, pretend that they came up out of the sea and had wings. However, Solomon, having one day a mind to view the horses, ordered them to be brought before him, and was so taken up with them that he spent the remainder of the day, till after sunset, in looking on them; by which means he almost neglected the prayer, which ought to have been said at that time, till it was too late: but when he perceived his omission, he was so greatly concerned at it, that ordering the horses to be brought back, he killed them all as an offering to God, except only a hundred of the best of them. But God made him ample amends for his loss, by giving him dominion over the winds."
- iv Arafat is a mountain near Mecca, so named from the tradition that Adam, upon his repentance, was reunited there to Eve, after a separation of two hundred years.

- v Isrāfil is one of the Archangels, who will sound the last trumpet at the resurrection. He has "the sweetest voice of all God's creatures."
- vi Iblīs, "he who despairs," is Shayṭān, or Satan, who fell from Heaven on account of arrogantly refusing to pay reverence to Adam at the creation, when all other Angels worshipped the first man.
- vii Wuḍū', or washing (either with actual water or by imitating the process with sand &c.), must precede all those prayers, which are *fard*, or "incumbent." These are commenced in a standing attitude, Qiyām, the thumbs touching the lobes of the ears and the face turning towards Mecca.
- viii The "Companions of the right hands" are so called because they will have the book of their good deeds put into their right hands in token of salvation; while evildoers will have their scroll of condemnation, at the last day, thrust into their left hands.
- ix "Such, moreover, as of old time," etc. These are the early prophets and holy teachers in all nations. The text of the Qur'an calls them "the leaders, the leaders!" that emphatic repetition denoting their dignity, and the assurance of their prominence in the final reward.
- x "Mawz-trees." The original word *ṭalḥ* may mean either the plantain, or that acacia which has small round golden blossoms.
- xi Sale has a citation upon these privileged attributes of the Houris. "Allah has created them purposely of finer materials than females of this world, and subject to none of those inconveniences which are natural to the sex. Some understand this passage of the beatified women; who, though they died old and ill-favoured, shall yet all be restored to their youth and beauty in Paradise."
- xii "At Azan." The time of the call to prayer for Muslims.
- xiii "And spider." One of the Suras of the Qur'an, the 29th, is named after this insect.
- xiv "The Verse of the Throne." This (which is often engraved



on seal rings in the east) is so called from the word Kursī, the "chair or throne" of Allah, which occurs in the sublime passage cited. In the judgment of Muslims the "Throne-Verse" is one of the noblest portions of the Qur'an, surpassing the majesty in diction of all other human compositions. It is taken from the second Sura, verse 256, and is rendered very exactly, as below, by Mr. Redhouse (to whose most learned and laborious article in the "Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society," January 1880, my indebtedness has been extremely great): — "God, save whom there is no God, is the living, the Self-existing One. Drowsiness overcometh Him not, nor sleep. Unto Him belongeth whatever is in the heavens, and whatever in the earth. Who is he that shall make intercession with Him, save by his permission? He knoweth whatever is before them, and whatever is behind them; and they comprehend not a single matter of His knowledge, save only that which He hath willed. His firmament spans the heavens and the earth, the preservation whereof doth not distress Him. And He is the Most High, the Most Supreme."

N.B. — Each chapter of the Qur'an is called a Sura, a term signifying a course of bricks in a wall; and the Suras are divided into 'āyāt, verses, or more literally "signs."

- xv        The Sura, 59, is known as the chapter "Of the Emigration."
- xvi       The Muslim doctors call the scriptural Terah, the father of Abraham, by the name of Āzar. This was also the title of the god of the planet Mars. Abraham's father is moreover styled Zarah in the Talmud, and Athar also, by Eusebius.
- xvii      "Friend of Allah." The Muslims so denominate Abraham, Al-Khalil.
- xviii     This is suggested from Sura 35, the chapter "Of the Angels," or "Of the Originator." The Archangel Gabriel is said to have appeared to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, on the night of his journey to Heaven, having no less than three hundred pairs of wings!
- xix       "Michael," or Mikā'il. The Archangel here named was especially the guardian of the Jews. The Israelites of Mecca

- told Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that they would have received his Qur'an, if Michael instead of Gabriel had revealed it.
- XX "Azrā'el." The Archangel of death.
- XXI "God's Friend." Please see note xvii.
- XXII "People of the bench." This was the name given to the poor persons whom the Prophet ﷺ sustained by alms every day, and who used to wait for his gifts, sitting upon the bench outside the Prophet's house at Medina.
- XXIII The very remarkable Sura quoted here, entitled sometimes "The Brightness," came to the Prophet ﷺ thus: – "It is related that no revelation having been vouchsafed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for several days, in answer to some questions put to him by the Quraysh, because he had confidently promised to resolve them the next day, without adding the exception, if it please God, or because he had repulsed an importunate beggar, or else because a dead puppy lay under his seat, or for some other reason; his enemies said that God had left him: whereupon this chapter was sent down for his consolation."
- XXIV "The Journey of the Night." "It is a dispute," writes Sale, "among the Muhammedan divines, whether their Prophet's night-journey was really performed by him corporally, or whether it was only a dream or vision. Some think the whole was no more than a vision; and allege an express tradition of Muāwiyah, one of Muhammad's successors, to that purpose. Others suppose he was carried bodily to Jerusalem, but no farther; and that he ascended thence to Heaven in spirit only. But the received opinion is, that it was no vision, but that he was actually transported in the body to the journey's end; and if any impossibility be objected, they think it a sufficient answer to say, that it might easily be effected by an omnipotent agent."
- XXV "One Fātiḥah." The name of the opening prayer for the Muslims.

- xxvi "Munkar and Nakīr" are the two Angels who conduct "the examination of the Tomb." They come to a man directly as he is laid in his grave, and catechise him as to his faith. If he repeats quickly and gladly the formula of Islam, they cause him to repose in peace; but if he is uncertain or heterodox, they belabour him with iron clubs, till his cries are so bitter that they are to be heard all through the earth, except by men and Jinns. Then the two black Ministers press the clay down upon the corpse, and leave it to be wasted and consumed till the time of resurrection.
- xxvii "Hadith." The traditional sayings which supplement the Qur'an.
- xxviii "Zamzam." This is the holy well at Mecca, within the sacred precincts, believed to be that very spring which was revealed to Hagar when she fled with Ishmael.
- xxix This legend of Nimrūd is alluded to in Sura 21 of the Qur'an, entitled the "Chapter of Prophets."
- xxx "Black Ḥalīmah." The Prophet was suckled by a Bedouin foster-nurse.
- xxxi "Ḥirā'." A wild and solitary mountain near Mecca.
- xxxii "Miqāt." These are the last six stages on the journey to Mecca. The ihrām, or "garb of sanctity," consists of two wrappers without seams, one bound round the waist, the other passed over the shoulders. The Ṭawāf is the seven-fold circuit of the Kaabah, made three times quickly, and four times slowly, by all pilgrims.
- xxxiii "Ye let stray your she-camels." Nothing is held more valuable among the goods of an Arab than a she-camel near to foaling.
- xxxiv "Who killed thee, little maid?" This alludes to the ancient practice of infanticide among the Arabs, which the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ strenuously denounced.
- xxxv "He saw it and he heard." Alluding to the Prophet ﷺ and his journey to Heaven.

- xxxvi "Al-Aḥqāf" is the plural of Ḥaqf, and signifies "lands which lie in a winding or narrow boundary," specially applied to a district in the province of Hadramaut.
- xxxvii "Al-Kauthar." This word signifies abundance, especially of good, and thence the gift of wisdom and prophecy. Or it may mean abundance of wealth, followers, and the like. It is here used of a river in Paradise, whence the water is derived into the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ pond, of which the blessed are to drink before their admission. According to a tradition of the Prophet ﷺ, this river, wherein his Lord promised him abundant good, is sweeter than honey, whiter than milk, cooler than snow, and smoother than cream; its banks are of chrysolites, and those who drink of it shall never thirst.
- xxxviii "Al-Tāriq" is the "star that appears" by night, i.e., the morning star.
- xxxix "When the soul comes to the neck." A Qur'anic phrase for the last gasp of death.
- xl "The roses on that tree." In the mystic language of the East, the rose is the symbol of that Divine beauty which is the object of the soul's love.
- xli "'Illiyūn." This means literally "exalted places."
- xlii "Tasnīm." A stream in Paradise, so called because its waters the highest regions there.
- xliii "Al-Fātiḥah." This is the 1st chapter of the Qur'an, which is also a prayer, and held in great veneration by the Muslims, who give it many honourable titles; as the chapter of prayer, of praise, of thanksgiving, of *treasure*, etc. They regard it as the quintessence of the whole Qur'an, and often repeat it in their devotions both public and private, as Christians do the Lord's Prayer.
- xliv "The morning mills." At daybreak in Eastern countries almost the first sound of awakening domestic life in the noise of the stones used to grind meal.

- xliv "The time for prayer," says Professor Palmer, "is called from the minarets of the mosques by Muezzins or criers, in the following words: – 'God is great' (4 times); 'I bear witness that there is no God but God' (twice); 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the apostle of God' (twice); 'Come hither to prayers' (twice)' 'Come hither to salvation' (twice); 'God is just!' 'There is no other God than God!' In the early morning the Muezzin adds, 'Prayer is better than sleep!'"
- xlvi "The *Mishkāt Maṣābiḥ*." The book of the conversations of the Prophet ﷺ.
- xlvii *Laylat al-Qadr* "The Night of Power," was that on which the Qur'an was declared to have been revealed.
- xlviiii "Al-Barzakh." The Qur'an says, "Behind them shall be a bar, until the day of resurrection." Upon this Sale writes: "The original word *barzakh*, here translated 'bar,' primarily signifies any partition, or interstice, which divides one thing from another; but is used by the Arabs not always in the same, and sometimes in an obscure sense. They seem generally to express by it what the Greeks did by the word Hades; one while using it for the place of the dead, another while for the time of their continuance in that state, and another while for the state itself. It is defined by their critics to be the interval or space between this world and the next, or between death and the resurrection; every person who dies being said to enter *Al-Barzakh*. The commentators on this passage expound it as a barrier, or invincible obstacle, cutting off all possibility of return into the world, after death."
- xl ix "Birds." If the departed person was a believer, the Muslims say two Angels must meet his soul, and convey it to Heaven, that its place there may be assigned, according to its merit and degree. They distinguish the souls of the Faithful into three classes: the first of prophets, whose souls are admitted into Paradise immediately; the second of martyrs, whose spirits, according to a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, rest in the crops of green birds which eat of the

fruits and drink of the rivers of Paradise; and the third of other believers, concerning the state of whose souls before the resurrection there are various opinions. Some say they stay near the sepulchres, with liberty, however, of going wherever they please; which they confirm from the Prophet's manner of saluting the dead, alluded to elsewhere.

- I The "ten holy eves" are the first ten nights of the sacred month of Dhu'l Hġjah.
- li "Iram" was the name of the palace and pleasure-garden built by Sheddād, son of 'Ād, in the desert of Aden. The story is related on another page.
- lii The Thamudites of the Hadramaut having killed their prophet, were utterly destroyed by tempests, and their city depopulated.
- liii "Al-Hudhud." The Arab historians, Sale says, tell us that Solomon, having finished the temple of Jerusalem, went in pilgrimage to Mecca, where, having stayed as long as he pleased, he proceeded toward Yemen; and leaving Mecca in the morning, he arrived by noon at Sana'a, and being extremely delighted with the country, rested there; but wanting water to make the ablution, he looked among the birds for the lapwing, called by the Arabs al-Hudhud, whose business is was to find it; for it is pretended she was sagacious or sharp-sighted enough to discover water underground, which the devils used to draw, after she had marked the place by digging with her bill: they add, that this bird was then taking a tour in the air, whence, seeing one of her companions alighting, she descended also, and having had the description given her by the other of the city of Saba, whence she was just arrived, they both went together to take a view of the place, and returned soon after Solomon had made the inquiry which occasioned what follows.  
 "It may be proper to mention here what the Eastern writers fable of the manner of Solomon's travelling. They say that he had a carpet of green silk, on which his throne was placed, being of a prodigious length and breadth, and sufficient for all his forces to stand on, the men placing them-

selves on his right hand, and the spirits on his left; and that when all were in order, the wind, at his commands, took up the carpet, and transported it, with all that were on it, wherever he pleased; the army of birds at the same time flying over their heads, and forming a kind of canopy, to shade them from the sun."

liv "The sea-worm and the ant." The legend is that Solomon used the *teredo* to bore his topaz, and, by filling the winding hole of the ruby with sugar and water, tempted an ant to draw a silk thread through it.

lv "Munkar and Nakīr." These are the two Angels who visit the dead immediately after burial, and having set them upright in the grave, question them as to their faith and actions, as before described.

lvi "Al-Şirāt." The narrow bridge which all must cross from this world to the next world, "Finer than a hair and sharper than a razor."

"This bridge," it is written, "is beset on each side with briars and hooked thorns; which will, however, be no impediment to the good, for they shall pass with wonderful ease and swiftness, like lightning or the wind, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his Muslims leading the way; whereas the wicked, what with the slipperiness and extreme narrowness of the path, the entangling of the thorns, and the extinction of the light, which directed the former to Paradise, will soon miss their footing, and fall down headlong into hell, which is gaping beneath them."

lvii "Three darknesses." The body, the womb, and the amnion.

lviii This is the origin of the *ḥalāl*, a custom of Muslim hunters and butchers, who pronounce the formula of excuse and piety before slaying any animal.

lix "Al A'rāf." The partition between Heaven and Hell. The chapter quoted says, "And betwixt the two there is a wall and they shall cry out to the companions of Paradise, 'Peace be upon you,' but they cannot enter it, although they so desire."





## Biographies of Contributors

### MOHAMED ZAKARIYA

In 1960, Mohamed Zakariya began working as a machinist in a small Los Angeles factory catering to the Aerospace industry. During this period, he refined his interest in the Islamic religion's art and culture and began learning Arabic. A man of varied interests, his work and studies took him to Morocco, Europe, and England, where he studied Islamic manuscripts informally at the British Museum. At the same time, he was performing slapstick comedy with the zany British group Bruce Lacy and the Alberts, a precursor of Monty Python. His interest in music, which involved making musical instruments, was profoundly affected by his many long stays in London.

Zakariya returned to the United States in 1967 and worked with the antiquarian impresario Oscar Meyer, for whom he crafted a variety of instruments from the history of science, as well as other artistic constructs. In the early 1970s, he moved to Virginia, where he found a wife, some cats, and a home.

In 1984 Zakariya went to Istanbul at the invitation of the Research Center for Islamic History, Art, and Culture to study Arabic-script calligraphy with two Turkish masters. He subsequently received the *icazet* in Szulus/Nesih scripts from Hasan Celebi and in Talik script from the late Ali Alparslan. Since then, he has pursued the calligraphic life at home and abroad, having a number of exhibitions and fulfilling many commissions, as well as teaching the art to a circle of serious students.

Zakariya is represented by Suleyman Cooke, Salon D'Art. His work may be seen at [www.MohamedZakariya.com](http://www.MohamedZakariya.com).

#### HAMZA YUSUF

Hamza Yusuf is president and senior faculty member of Zaytuna College, America's first accredited Muslim liberal arts college. He is an advisor to Stanford University's Program in Islamic Studies and the Center for Islamic Studies at Berkeley's Graduate Theological Union. In addition, he serves as vice-president for the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, which was founded and is currently presided over by Shaykh Abdallah bin Bayyah, one of the top jurists and masters of Islamic sciences in the world. He is the author of several books and scholarly articles, and has translated major creedal Islamic texts into English. Books he has authored or translated include *Purification of the Heart*, *The Content of Character*, *The Creed of Imam al-Tahawi*, *Caesarean Moon Births*, *Prayer of the Oppressed* and *Agenda to Change our Condition*. Recently, Hamza Yusuf was ranked as "the Western world's most influential Islamic scholar" by *The Muslim 500*, edited by John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin.

#### ROBERT P. GEORGE

Professor George holds Princeton's celebrated McCormick Chair in Jurisprudence and is the founding director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions. He served as chairman of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), and before that on the President's Council on Bioethics and as a presidential appointee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. He also served as the U.S. member of UNESCO's World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST). He is a former Judicial Fellow at the Supreme

Court of the United States, where he received the Justice Tom C. Clark Award.

He is the author of *In Defense of Natural Law; Making Men Moral: Civil Liberties and Public Morality; The Clash of Orthodoxies: Law, Religion and Morality in Crisis; Conscience and Its Enemies: Confronting the Dogmas of Liberal Secularism*; and co-author of *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life; Body-Self Dualism in Contemporary Ethics and Politics; What is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense*; and *Conjugal Union: What Marriage Is and Why It Matters*. His scholarly articles and reviews have appeared in such journals as the *Harvard Law Review*, the *Yale Law Journal*, the *Columbia Law Review*, the *American Journal of Jurisprudence*, and the *Review of Politics*.

Professor George is a recipient of many honors and awards, including the Presidential Citizens Medal, the Honorary Medal for the Defense of Human Rights of the Republic of Poland, the Canterbury Medal of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, the Sidney Hook Memorial Award of the National Association of Scholars, the Philip Merrill Award of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, the Bradley Prize for Intellectual and Civic Achievement, and Princeton University's President's Award for Distinguished Teaching. He has given honorific lectures at Harvard, Yale, University of St. Andrews, and Cornell University. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and holds honorary doctorates of law, ethics, science, letters, divinity, humanities, law and moral values, civil law, humane letters, and juridical science. A graduate of Swarthmore College, he holds J.D. and M.T.S. degrees from Harvard University and the degree of D.Phil. from Oxford University. In November of 2016 he will receive the degrees of B.C.L. and D.C.L. from Oxford.

#### CHARLES LE GAI EATON

The late Charles Le Gai Eaton, also known as Hasan 'Abd al-Hakim, was a renowned Muslim intellectual, writer and broadcaster. Eaton was born in 1921 in Switzerland, and educated at Charterhouse School and then at King's College, Cambridge. He was commissioned into the British Army during the second World War, and after the war, Eaton's life journey led him to serve as an actor, university lecturer, journalist, writer, and a diplomat in countries such as Jamaica, Egypt, India, and Ghana.

Eaton converted to Islam in 1951 in Cairo under the mentorship of notable British Scholar Martin Lings. It is through Lings where he met Frithjof Schuon, another important teacher who shaped Eaton's intellectual and spiritual orientation. Eaton served as a consultant to the Islamic Cultural Centre in London, where he also edited the respected journal entitled *The Islamic Quarterly*. It was during these decades that Eaton made a major contribution to the expanding British Muslim community, both as writer and broadcaster, as well as in the capacity of advisor and counselor to those, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, who were particularly interested in Sufism, the inner, mystical tradition of Islam. For it was this dimension of the faith which had attracted him to Islam, and it was this dimension which dominated his two major Islamic works, *Islam and the Destiny of Man* (1985), and *Remembering God—Reflections on Islam* (2000).

He also authored works such as *King of the Castle and the Richest Vein*, but it was *Islam and the Destiny of Man* which became his bestseller, with over 85,000 copies sold. It established his reputation as one of the most serious Islamic thinkers of his generation.

For Eaton, Islam was about inward transformation and the cultivation of virtue through the remembrance of the Divine.

He harmoniously integrated his British identity with his Islamic faith, serving as an ideal role model for indigenous British Muslims. To those that argue that Islam is inherently incompatible with traditional British values, Eaton provided an eloquent living refutation. It is for this very reason, soon after his death, Eaton was hailed as “a towering patriarch of British Islam”.

Charles Le Gai Eaton died on February 26, 2010—the same day as the Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ birthday, according to the Muslim calendar. He is survived by his sons Leo and Maurice, his daughters Judy and Ann, and his four grandchildren.\*

\* Edited from Dr. Reza Shah-Kazemi’s extended biography (2010)

# Transliteration Key

THE TRANSLITERATION CONVENTION used throughout this book represents the Arabic script as follows:

## Consonants:

ا		د	d	ذ	d	ك	k
ب	b	ذ	dh	ط	t	ل	l
ت	t	ر	r	ظ	z	م	m
ث	th	ز	z	ع	ʕ	ن	n
ج	j	س	s	غ	gh	هـ	h
ح	ḥ	ش	sh	ف	f	و	w
خ	kh	ص	ṣ	ق	q	ي	y

## Short vowels:

ا	a	u	i
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## Long vowels:

آ	ā	ū	ī
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## Diphthongs:

او	aw	اي	ay
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The definite article is rendered al- to preserve the representation of the Arabic script as written, not as pronounced, except where fully inflected expressions are quoted as such. Therefore, ash-shams is rendered al-shams, unless it appears in a fully inflected verbal expression, such as wa sh-shamsi wa ḍuḥāhā. Without inflection, this written expression is rendered wa al-shams wa ḍuḥāhā.

The *tā' marbūṭah* is represented by a final *h*, unless it ends the first term of an *iḍāfah* construction, as in *laylat al-qadr*. Note that the *tā' marbūṭah* in *ahl al-sunnah wa al-jamā'ah*, for instance, is represented as an *h* because it is not the first term of an *iḍāfah* construction.

Hamzat al-*waṣl* will only be accounted for whenever preceded by a preposition, never for the definite article *alif-lām*, and will in such cases be indicated by a hyphen. Hence, the phrase *wa-mnun 'alaynā minnata l-karīmi* indicates hamzat al-*waṣl* with a hyphen in *wa-mnun*, but not in *minnata l-karīmi*.

Words that have entered the English language, such as “*hadith*,” “*fatwa*,” and “*imam*,” are not transliterated or italicized unless rendered in formulaic Arabic expressions or idiomatic phrases.

ﷻ An invocation of God’s blessings and peace upon the Prophet Muḥammad: “May God’s blessings and peace be upon him.”